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Tuo Mao: the Operational History of the People's Liberation Army

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**TUO MAO: THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE
PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY**

By

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**A Thesis Submitted to Bond University in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

26 May 2008

BOND UNIVERSITY**CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATE**

I certify that the thesis entitled Tuo Mao: The Operational History of the People's Liberation Army and submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed.....

Date.....

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Finally, thanks go to my family: my brother who allowed me to use his personal library; and my wife and children, who endured my dedication to research and writing for the duration of this PhD commitment.

A NOTE ON SOURCES AND TRANSLITERATION

Sources

The most important sources of public domain intelligence and commentary on China have until recently originated outside China. The Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) stopped supplying university libraries with translated material in 1997 and a primary source of material from China was lost to researchers. Defence and defence-related material is readily available from China but there is a lack of qualified translators in this field. I have been fortunate in acquiring a source of Chinese defence magazines and have been translating these regularly since October 2003, presenting the results in *GI Zhou Newsletter* which I publish. This is the only source of English-language information on many Chinese weapons systems and articles on the PLA available to researchers in the field. The Russian translations have been almost all done by Stephen L. Sewell, to whom I am indebted.

Transliteration

Chinese names and terminology are rendered in China's official *pinyin* transliteration system. The exceptions are:

- (i) Source citations where names appear in the older Wade-Giles or other systems;
- (ii) The use of the name 'Canton' instead of 'Guangzhou' in the 'Canton Commune', a nomenclature which is also consistent the familiar name of Manchuria for *dongbei*, and Tibet instead of *Xizang*; and
- (iii) The names of historical persons, such as Sun Tzu and Sun Yat-sen.

SUMMARY

Tuo Mao translates literally as ‘shedding feathers’ but in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) it is the euphemism for removing the last vestiges of Mao Zedong’s vision for China’s armed forces. Mao envisaged letting an enemy strike deep into China and then be destroyed by a vast militia force using ‘People’s War’. His vision, to which the PLA only paid lip service, has been replaced by one employing modern combined arms forces, operating modular independent battle groups able to fight on and outside China’s land borders, hence the term ‘Shedding Mao’. It is the central argument of this thesis that by studying the operational history of the People’s Liberation Army, it can be proven that its operational art was forged in the period 1928-1937 and based on the Soviet Union’s doctrine of operational theory, continuing to this day. The significance of the thesis is that it revises and updates conventional thinking among external analysts about China’s guiding defence philosophy.

This thesis shows that the doctrine of Active Defence has been the overriding concern of the PLA since 1950 and not any form of People’s War. Active Defence is based on three basic principles: no provocation of other nations; no bases anywhere on foreign soil; and no seizure of territory. The PLA’s articulated doctrine in the 1950s was to ‘Protect the North and Defend the South’. In the 1960s this changed to ‘Lure the Enemy Deep into the Country’ in order to crush him with ‘People’s War’. In the 1970s, this became ‘Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big’. By using examples of the PLA in battle this thesis shows how the doctrine changed in light of failures in battle. The post-Mao reorganisation of the PLA to rectify these faults turned it into a modern military force, building on this legacy by transforming itself into a hardened and networked military. The PLA has now reached a stage of its history where it can fully implement its operational art that took root in the theories espoused in the 1920s and 1930s through the Soviet model, and tried to be implemented in the 1950s and 1960s only to be thwarted by the Cultural Revolution. The People’s Liberation Army’s operational art, this thesis demonstrates, has now come of age.

Introduction

Without a militia, our regular army would be like a river without a source, a tree without roots, or a general with only one arm, and thus could never fight a genuine people's war . . . With the help of the regional forces and the broad masses of militiamen in battles, the main forces can spare a free hand to form a powerful 'fist', seeking and creating advantageous opportunities to fight concentrated battles of annihilation.¹

People's war is used to cover the concept of a just war - one fought by the entire nation with honour - versus an unjust war - a war which runs contrary to the principles of China's defence posture and national interests.²

An operational history is defined here as the history of how an organisation was structured, how it conducted its day-to-day activities, and how it acted upon policy decisions. It is the contention and central argument of this thesis that by studying the operational history of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), it may be argued that the operational art of the PLA was forged in the period 1928-1937, was based on the Soviet Union's doctrine of operational theory, and that this continues unto the present.

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- 1 . Mao Zedong quoted in Jencks, H. *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945 -1981*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1982, p. 174.
 - 2 . Senior Colonel Hua Liuhu, PLA specialist on strategy and security, speaking to the United States Command and General Staff College, 8 January 2000, in Sewell, S.L. *Chinese Military Strategy*, p. 3.

David Shambaugh, amongst others, criticised studies of the Chinese military as lacking sufficient theoretic frameworks and comparative perspectives.³ He also noted that PLA studies came mainly from experts in war colleges or think tanks with military connections only.⁴ The theoretical framework of most scholars may well have been flawed unintentionally by being filtered through the perspective of a large high resource military like the United States, which has overplayed the power of the PLA in the region. I take the work (cited below) of William Whitson, Harlan Jencks and Dennis Blasko as exceptions to the rule. Harlan Jencks came from a Special Forces background where company and platoon sized units were the norm and William Whitson looked at the history of the PLA from its beginnings, so charting the growth from company-sized units to Army Corps. Dennis Blasko was a US Army intelligence and foreign area officer specialising on the PLA.

There are two questions that need to be asked. Where did Mao obtain his ideas for his theory on People's War, and where did the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (the predecessor to the PLA) learn to wage war?

Whitson's view, argued in his work, *The Chinese High Command 1927-1971*, was that People's War never existed but was a means of controlling and marshalling the population. Military commanders expected the Party to mobilise the masses, this was not a role of the PLA.⁵ Whitson (like Jencks) believed that Liu Bochong - the senior Red Army and later PLA marshal - was influenced by his training in Moscow. Specifically, this training was in the 'integral strategy' model that was in vogue in Moscow in the late

3 Shambaugh, D. 'PLA Strategy and Doctrine: Recommendations for a Future Research Agenda', Discussion Paper prepared for *Chinese Military Studies: A Conference on the State of the Field*, U.S. National Defense University Institute for National Strategic Studies, Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs, Fort McNair, October 26-27, 2000.

4 . *Ibid.*

5 . Whitson, W. & Chen-Hsia Huang. *The Chinese High Command: A History of Communist Military Politics 1927-71*, Macmillan, London, 1973, pp. 468-469.

1920s. This emphasised a professional military free of commissars' influence in technical plans and operations. Whitson believed, and this thesis concurs with him, that Mao maintained a lifelong commitment to a Chinese version of Frunze's 'unified military strategy'⁶ and did not countenance a purely professional 'integral strategy'.

The aim of this thesis is to develop Whitson's work with the advantage of documents unavailable to him in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The research brought to bear in this shows that the doctrine of Active Defence was the overriding concern of the PLA since 1930 and not People's War. Active Defence is circumscribed by three principles: no provocation of other nations; no bases anywhere on foreign soil; and no seizure of territory.⁷ The last principle must be tempered with the fact that the People's Republic of China (PRC) lays claim to the entire South China Sea and controls Tibet by force. The Chinese intervention against United Nations Forces in the Korean War, and the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, are justified using this strategy. Whitson was aware of this when he argued that the 1962 Sino-Indian War showed the continuity in the Chinese professional preference for the offensive defensive, the Chinese government's way of justifying pre-emptive strikes, in which the initial spoiling attack is staged against the weaker adversary (India) on the eve of an assumed coordinated attack against China (in this case the USSR).⁸ This was also one of the rationales behind the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict. Offensive defence represents the lynchpin of Active Defence. Although the PLA has long described its doctrine as Active Defence, it has only recently been equipped properly to enable it to enact this doctrine.⁹ The PLA can now deploy an all arms force beyond its borders as required.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 473. Frunze was an outstanding senior general with the Soviet Red Army from 1917 until his death in 1925. He created the RKKA Academy in 1924 to professionalise the Red Army officer corps and was a leading theorist and influence on the operational level of warfare. The academy was renamed the Frunze Military Academy after his death in 1925. See Gareev, M.A. *M.V.Frunze, Military Theorist*, Pergamon-Brassey's, Washington D.C., 1988, pp. 1 - 42, 57 - 60 & 180 - 195.

7. Sewell, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

8. Whitson, *op. cit.*, p. 489.

9. Taken from observations by Senior Colonel Hua Liuhu. Sewell, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

Most commentators, including David Shambaugh, identify an evolution in PLA doctrine across four phases: 'People's War' (1935-79); 'People's War Under Modern Conditions' (1979-1985), 'Limited War' (1985-91); and 'Limited War Under High Technology Conditions' (1991 – present).¹⁰ This is at odds with the People's Liberation Army which views the phases differently. In the 1950s the doctrine of the PLA was to 'Protect the North (from the Soviet Union) and Defend the South (Against the United States/Taiwan)'. In the 1960s this changed to 'Lure the Enemy Deep into the Country' in order to crush him with 'People's War'. By the 1970s, the PLA was to 'Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big', by using nuclear weapons, and this evolved from the late 1980s into 'informationized' (*xinxihua*) warfare.¹¹ These all, however, are regarded by the People's Liberation Army itself as phases in the way they fight (and have fought) and have been subordinate to Active Defence.

That the Chinese defence establishment prior to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) disregarded People's War as well will be shown. So too, it should be said, the PLA under Deng Xiaoping's reforms was simply reverting to its way of operating prior to the Cultural Revolution. Harlan Jencks noted in an email to the author of this thesis that:

I must point out that almost everything Deng Xiaoping and the newly 'rehabilitated' old cadres implemented in the late 1970s & early 1980s was picked up from where they left off in the early 1960s. The same men were in charge of the same measures after the GPCR interruption. This has been widely noted with respect to lots of economic, industrial, and military measures.¹²

10 . Shambaugh, *op.cit.*

11 . Sewell, *op.cit.* p. 3; See also Joffe, E., "'People's War under Modern Conditions": A Doctrine for Modern War', *China Quarterly*, No. 112, October-December 1987, pp. 551 – 571 passim.

12 . Harlan Jencks, private correspondence to the author, 6 June 2004, and quoted verbatim with his permission. In the email 'with respect to' was written as 'w.r.t.'.

This means that Mao Zedong's strategy of People's War was never accepted nor adopted by the PLA and was, at best, paid lip service. Even though 'the gun must be subordinate to the party', it is more conceivable that the PLA's position was closer to Sun Tzu's (Sun Tzu's) dictum 'All Warfare is Based on Deception'¹³ against the Party itself. This obviously throws into question most works written on the People's Liberation Army since the mid-1960s, and is based on source documentation written by the People's Liberation Army itself.

Whitson argued that out of the five encirclement campaigns only the second could be viewed as the Red Army employing People's War to win the campaign. Mao saw the First Encirclement Campaign as correct yet it started with a pre-emptive thrust (spoiling attack) against the expected path of attack. Although this was in vain, it enabled the Red Army to hit the Guomindang (GMD) forces from the west. The Second was similar to the First and by the Third Encirclement Campaign Mao employed his theories of extensive manoeuvre and deception by guerrillas to confuse the invading GMD forces. The Fourth Encirclement Campaign saw the Red Army caught off guard and having to trade land for time until it could rest and regain the initiative. The use of attacks outside the Jiangxi Soviet, to relieve the pressure on the Soviet, reflected the increase in power of the 28 Bolsheviks¹⁴ and Otto Braun as Mao's ability to influence events was on the wane.¹⁵ The Fifth Encirclement campaign violated all of Mao's principles of war but the Red Army had no choice. Further, the Long March was planned by professionals and People's War was used in name only in 1937-1942, notably after the ill-fated One Hundred Regiments campaign. This was when the combat power of the Red Army was at

13 . Giles, L. *Sun Tzu on the Art of War*, Reprint of the 1910 edition, Graham Brash, Singapore, 1988, p. 6.

14 . The 28 Bolsheviks, also known as the Returned Students faction, had studied in the Soviet Union and were influenced by Moscow's views on warfare and politics. The group was nominally lead by Bo Gu and Zhang Wentian and they fell from power when Mao took control after the Zunyi Conference in January 1935.

15 . Whitson, *op.cit.*, p. 486.

low ebb, as it was a defensive strategy and an example of the operational art as described by Frunze.¹⁶

People's War, as envisaged by Mao, was essentially guerrilla warfare conducted generally at platoon strength, occasionally at company and rarely at battalion strength. He saw People's War as a way of utilising the entire population in some way to defeat the enemy, and its genesis was during the period of the Jiangxi Soviet (1930 – 1934). During this period there was a series of locally based armed units called 'local armed units'. These were the Red Guards and Young Pioneers and they were tasked to carry out guerrilla operations and to assist the Red Army main forces in battle. They originally had a similar structure to the Red Army but this was found too cumbersome and the organization was changed to reflect the small unit tactics of the Red Guard and Young Pioneer units.¹⁷

Guerrilla detachments adopted a structure of five squads, three with firearms and two with spears; there were three platoons and the detachment was directly responsible to a three-man detachment headquarters.¹⁸ There were eight to fifteen men in a squad, three to five squads to a platoon and three platoons to a company. They were all male and they ranged in age from 23 to 50. Mao described how an entire district had mobilised the masses by militarising the villages in his investigation of the *Xingguo* tenth district known as the *Yongfeng* district in late October 1930.¹⁹ The Children's and Youth Corps normally did the day sentry with two girls and two boys from the Children's Corps led by a member of the Youth Corps. Their job was to check internal travel passes. They

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 486 & 486.

17. 'A Secret Order on the Problem of Organising Local Armed Forces', in Schram, S.R. *Mao's Road to Power Revolutionary Writings 1912.1949 Volume IV The Rise and Fall of the Chinese Soviet Republic 1930-1934*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1997, p. 340.

18. *Ibid.*

19. 'Xingguo Investigation (October 1930)', in Schram, S.R. *Mao's Road to Power Revolutionary Writings 1912.1949 Volume III From the Jinggangshan to the Establishment of the Jiangxi Soviets July 1927-December 1930*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1995, pp. 651 - 655.

reported directly to a detachment commander who was aided by two vice detachment commanders.²⁰

Herein lays the difference to other studies of the Red Army and the People's Liberation Army. This thesis will proceed from the bottom up, using a building block approach to lock in all the pieces of the PLA's triangular organisational structure. Previously the capability and organisational structure of the PLA was derived by counting the number of pieces of equipment and then working from the top down.²¹ The disadvantage of this is that the figures never go below battalion strength, and it is in this level that the fighting strength of an army is located. Indeed, the organisational charts for the PLA infantry regiment and below have been distorted in previous works due to the mistranslation of a major source document.²²

The author of this thesis was the first since 1984 to publish open source documents on the structure of the lower formations of the PLA,²³ identifying errors in the translation of the source document on the structure of the fighting arms of the PLA, which had been the basis of all work on PLA studies since 1965.²⁴ That the structure was not translated into NATO terminology caused the problem: confusion occurred when comparing it with

20 . Schram, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 340.

21 . Blasko, D. J. *PLA Ground Forces: Topics for Additional Study*, Discussion Paper, "Chinese Military Studies: A Conference on the State of the Field," U.S. National Defense University, Washington, DC, October 2000.

22 . Cheng Mien-chih. 'The Organization and Equipment of the Chinese Communist Infantry', *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 10, July 1967, pp. 18-25. This article was based on documents on organization and equipment brought by defectors to Taiwan in 1965. Nelson, H.W. *The Chinese Military System: An Organizational Study of the Chinese People's Liberation Army*, Brassey's Publishers, London, 1977, p. 242.

23 . Andrew, M. *GI Zhou Newsletter*, Number 2, published by the author, Darwin, 2001. Harlan Jencks quoted from an early draft before I had added corrections. This is in Jencks, H. *Thoughts and Questions about PLA Ground Forces*, Conference Paper, "Chinese Military Studies: A Conference on the State of the Field", US National Defense University, Washington, DC, October 2000, pp. 2, 10, & 18 -22.

24 . The United States Defense Intelligence Agency used the article by Cheng Mien-chih as its departure point in its unclassified work, *Handbook of the Chinese People's Liberation Army*, DIA, DDB-2680-32-84, November 1984. Harlan Jencks explained this to the author in an email.

similar structures from other forces. The Chinese military has historically overstated the named size of its units, at least since the late Qing dynasty. For example, a platoon-sized unit is often called a company.

Recent material from Russia and China has changed the generally accepted view of Soviet influence on the PLA. Work by the author of this thesis will be included, as well as this author's translations of Chinese weapon capabilities and their use in combat. These translations will elaborate on how the PLA's force structure and capability, behaviour and strategy, have been intertwined from 1949. The opening up of discussions and articles about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution have revealed it to be a time of experimentation by the arms factories that led to the rapid increase of PLA capability in the 1980s. The United States military had noticed that despite the People's War rhetoric of the 1960s, there was large-scale development and production of improved types and large quantities of military equipment.²⁵ Lo Jui-cheng, the secretary-general of the Military Affairs Commission, complained at the time that research moved from 'design to design without completing anything'.²⁶ The capability of the PLA and its equipment has been both under and overrated, as the capabilities of its equipment have not been evaluated adequately in any recent work, or how they related to the force structures of the PLA and Red Army before it.

Literature Review

Studies of the People's Liberation Army prior to 1990 suffered from a shortage of resources, relying mainly on the Central Intelligence Agency's Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) translations; original source material on the PLA in the 1950s and 1960s was almost impossible to come by. China was essentially a closed society and other than the *People's Liberation Daily*, and the odd visitor, information was not

25 . Jencks, 1982. *op.cit.*, p. 190.

26 . Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 61.

readily available to a researcher outside the intelligence communities. Material from the United States was tainted with anti-communist rhetoric. For example, Robert Rigg's *Red China's Fighting Hordes* was based on open source intelligence reports from the Korean War; while any Chinese documents that were available were, at best, propaganda.²⁷

Edgar O'Ballance in his 1962 work, *The Red Army of China*, for the first time in English wrote a history of the People's Liberation Army from its beginnings as part of the Guomindang to after the Korean War.²⁸ In the preface he acknowledged the lack of accurate material and the inherent problems of the rewriting of history by the Chinese Communist Party. The problem of a lack of accurate material changed in October 1961. This was when Tibetan resistance fighters ambushed a People's Liberation Army convoy and captured 1,600 documents including 29 issues of the *Bulletin of Activities*, a classified series of reports meant for political cadres at the regimental level and above.²⁹ This provided a wealth of information on the People's Liberation Army, and the Hoover Institute published an English translation in 1965, as *The Politics of the Chinese Army*. *The Bulletin of Activities* and documents brought by Chinese defectors from the PLA to Taiwan in 1965 became the major sources on material on the People's Liberation Army. Both works were quoted by Samuel Griffith II in *The Chinese People's Liberation Army* and the former, by Alexander George, in his book *The Chinese Communist Army in Action: The Korean War and its Aftermath*.

These two works, quoted extensively by subsequent authors on the People's Liberation Army, contributed to the literature on the formulation of People's War doctrine during

27 . Rigg, R.B. *Red China's Fighting Hordes*, Military Service Publishing Company, Harrisburg, 1951; *Stories of the Chinese People's Volunteers*, Foreign Language Press, 1960; *A Volunteer soldier's day: recollections by men of the Chinese people's volunteers in the war to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea*, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1961.

28 . O'Ballance, E. *The Red Army of China*, Faber and Faber, London, 1962.

29 . Knaus, K.J. *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival*, Public Affairs, New York, p. 249.

the period 1927 – 1937, and its effect on the capability of the PLA in 1967.³⁰ This is not to detract from Edgar O’Ballance’s work. William W. Whitson contributed a major work on the higher workings of the PLA from its roots in 1927 and Edward Dreyer wrote a small piece in the early 1970s.³¹ These were added to by Harlan Jencks, Ellis Joffe and Thomas C. Roberts in the 1980s,³² but since that time no individual author has been published mentioning the effect of People’s War on the contemporary People’s Liberation Army. The more recent works have been RAND or United States Government reports that have tended to concentrate on the People’s Liberation Army’s ideas of Information Operations and the Revolution in Military Affairs, without the background knowledge of how these changed the previous doctrine which had been formulated during the period 1927-1937.³³

A Chinese language work that looks at how People’s War generated from the experiences of the Worker’s and Peasant’s Red Army in the period 1928-1937 was touched on by Cai Xiaoqian in his 1971 work, *The Study of Mao Zedong’s Military Thought and the People’s Warfare*, Shanghai Press, Taipei. This was also mentioned in Chen-Ya Tien’s 1992 work, *Chinese Military Theory: Ancient and Modern*, which quoted Cai’s work. Chen also looks at Chiang Kai-Shek’s military thought amongst others. The work suffers from the author attempting to cover a broad range of topics from grand strategy to small unit tactics in the absence of an understanding of the military, and neglects the problem with infrastructure in China during and before the Republican period.

30 . George, A. *The Chinese Communist Army in Action*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1967; Griffith, S.B. *The Chinese People’s Liberation Army*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1967.

31 . Whitson, *loc. cit.*; Whitson W.W. (ed.). *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s*, Praeger, New York, 1972.

32 . Jencks, *loc. cit.*; Roberts, T.C. *The Chinese People’s Militia and the Doctrine of People’s War*, National Defense University, Washington DC, 1983; Joffe, E. *The Chinese Army After Mao*, Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1987.

33 . The United States Army’s Foreign Military Studies Office and the RAND Corporation are particularly strong in publishing works on the Chinese Military. To be fair to some of the authors, they have no background on China but are excellent in their own fields of speciality.

Edgar O'Ballance's aforementioned work, *The Red Army of China*, was free of anti-communist rhetoric and looked at the political and military ramifications of Mao's rise to power. Alexander George published *The Chinese Communist Army in Action* in 1967, centred upon a series of interviews of approximately 300 Chinese prisoners of war conducted from March to May in 1951.³⁴ There were two aims for the interviews. The first was to find how the methodology of the Maoist guerrilla warfare model had converted an essentially guerrilla force in 1945 to a larger and more modern army by 1950. The second was to determine 'the extent to which PLA authorities had managed to develop their army along the requirements of their military model.'³⁵

The interviews reflected the soldiers' sentiments and revealed the structure of the PLA at the battalion level and below, especially at the company and platoon level. This book is unique in this respect. The areas of morale, Party control and small unit organization were emphasised and George ended his book with a chapter on the developments of the PLA after the Korean War. He used the *Bulletin of Activities* to compare the results of the changes the PLA undertook post Korean War.³⁶ This book stands as a landmark in the study of the People's Liberation Army at the lower levels. The 'three by three' structure of the infantry squad is examined and its origins to the Eighth Route Army given great credit, yet a similar arrangement had been in use by the United States Marine Corps since 1942. The 'three by three' structure refers to a section of ten soldiers broken up into three equal teams under a section commander. This is the book's only mistake, as the US Marine Corps in Shanghai and the Eighth Route Army had examined the origins of the 'three by three' independently in 1937 and 1938.³⁷

34 . George, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

35 . *Ibid.*, p. 16.

36 . Cheng, Chester J. (ed). *The Politics of The Chinese Red Army: a Translation of the Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army*, Hoover Institution Publications, Stanford, 1966.

37 . The Eighth Route Army's use of fire teams was not the only instance of fire teams being used in China at the time. In 1937 and 1938, General W.M. Greene when a captain with the 4th Marine Regiment in the International Settlement in Shanghai, developed and organised his Marine rifle company for riot control. Based around 'four man fighting teams', with each team imbued with the 'Follow Me' spirit, this was similar in concept to what the Chinese Communists were doing in

The next year (1967) saw the first major work on the People's Liberation Army that traced its history from its beginnings to 1966. Written by a China specialist, who also had the advantage of being a retired United States Marine Corps brigadier general, Samuel Griffith Jr's *The Chinese People's Liberation Army* was the definitive work to date.³⁸ Griffiths was also the first Westerner to start translating Mao's military works into English. Comprehensively researched, it gave an excellent account of the rise of the People's Liberation Army from its origins to the start of the Cultural Revolution with the benefit of the *Bulletin of Activities* and the Taiwanese translations of PLA manuals. It was not an anti-communist piece and gave a balanced view of the capabilities of China's army, navy and air force. It looked at People's War doctrine as it related to guerrilla warfare and the militia, and Griffiths was scathing of the United States military when necessary. This work overshadowed O'Ballance's due to the availability of new and accurate material. The only fault with Griffith's book is that it could have included a regimental organization chart.

The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s is regarded as a landmark piece due to the large number of intelligence analysts who wrote chapters in it.³⁹ A series of essays edited by William Whitson, a respected scholar on the Chinese military, it was notable straddling the period from the ending of the Cultural Revolution in 1969 and just prior to Nixon's visit to China in 1972. Edward Dreyer's chapter, 'Military Continuities: The PLA and Imperial China', unfortunately focussed mainly on the Tang (618-917 AD), Sung (960-1279 AD), and Ming (1368- 1644) dynasties with only one mention of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), and this concerned the crushing of the Taiping Rebellion. Part III was dedicated to the organisation of the PLA yet the seven chapters that

their own army. Greene, W.M. 'The Employment of the Marine Rifle Company in Street Riot Operations', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March 1940, pp. 50 & 62.

38 . Griffith, S.B. *The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1968.

39 . Whitson, W.W. (ed) *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s*, Praeger Press, New York, 1972.

comprised it used mainly the same sources. This was occasioned by the scarcity of open source material coming out of China during the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, aggravated by the Chinese Communist Government's penchant for secrecy and suspicion of Chinese contacts with external researchers. Part IV titled 'Military Style: Strategy and Tactics', was deficient in both tactics and capability. The work provided very little new material but gave the China studies community of the time an insight into official US government thinking on the People's Liberation Army.

From the early 1980s more open source material slowly became available but was often overlooked. Works like *Bingqi Zhishi* (Ordnance Knowledge) have been available since 1982 and the National Library of Australia, for example, has a full set. More recent works like *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang* (Tank and Armoured Vehicle) and *Qing Binqi* (Light Weapons) have added to the understanding of the PLA, but there has been a dearth of translators translating them. *Bingqi Zhishi*, when examined from its inception, has matured from being essentially a training manual, to one that examines foreign concepts and equipment, as well as introducing new concepts and ideas to the Chinese military. More recently, historical articles have started to appear in these journals, shedding new light on the way the PLA and its various organs have operated and the resulting changes in force structure from the Korean War onwards, as well as their equipment. For example, one article discusses the disposition and structure of army corps inside China from 1954 to 1986, showing how at different times in recent Chinese history forces have been moved around China in response to perceived threats.⁴⁰

Jonathan R. Adelman, a Russian specialist, wrote his work, *The Revolutionary Armies: The Historical Development of the Soviet and Chinese People's Liberation Armies*, in 1980, examining the formative periods of the two armies and twenty years after their winning of the civil war.⁴¹ In the PLA's case this was the period 1927 to 1949, with

40 . 'Jiefungjun zhongda yanxi huigu', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2004 Niandi, 9 Qi, Zhongdi 203, pp. 38 - 40.

41 . Adelman, J.A. *The Revolutionary Armies: The Historical Development of the Soviet and Chinese People's Liberation Armies*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1980.

Adelman concentrating on the period 1927 to 1937 after the Long March. Twenty years later was the height of the Cultural Revolution, and Lin Biao's failed bid for power followed by his disappearance. The contemporary period for the Soviet Army in the book was Stalin's purges in the late 1930s. Worthy for its time, it examined how the world's largest communist armies came into being, and what happened to them afterwards. The book, like all books on the period, suffered from the lack of primary source material from Chinese and Soviet archives, which have only recently become available to researchers. It offered no insights that had not been examined earlier in various articles in the journal *China Quarterly*.

In 1982 Harlan Jencks had his famous work on the People's Liberation Army, *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945-1981*, published. This was the definitive study of the People's Liberation Army and is the work with which to start when examining the PLA in the last two decades of the Twentieth Century. The work looked at the commitment and professionalism of the PLA's officer corps in the context of the period. Jencks was the first person to examine the influence of the old ex-Long March oligarchy on the modernisation and their effect on the professionalism of the PLA officer corps. He did this by showing how Stalin's purges in 1937 and 1938 meant that the Soviet Army entered the Second World War under the leadership of men with little or no 'revolutionary experience'.⁴² He then contrasted this with the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war in which there were still divisional commanders who were veterans of the Long March.⁴³ The ossified officer corps affected doctrine, force structure, military technology, Party ideology and cultural changes – all of which are examined in relation to their effect on the capability of the PLA. The author retired from the United States Army as a Colonel who served in Europe and in Vietnam; the knowledge and experience of his background is evident throughout the book. This is an excellent work that has stood the test of time. The organisational charts of the PLA at the end are still valuable today and reflect the author's intimate knowledge of the subject.

42. Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

43. *Ibid.*

In the mid-1980s, two works stood out as they were not written by American authors. These were Gerald Segal's *Defending China* and Ellis Joffe's *The Chinese Army after Mao*.⁴⁴ Both these works suffered from not using enough Chinese language sources, and were mostly based on the United States Government's Foreign Broadcasting Information Service. This was despite Chinese journals, like *Bingqi Zhishi* (Ordnance Knowledge), being readily available in the West and access to better reporting on Chinese military affairs.⁴⁵ Segal's work was an overview of the PLA's ability to defend China proper. It was another work that concerned itself with higher-level organisation while neglecting capability, except when quantifying equipment. No effort was made to address the serviceability of the equipment and its ability to survive modern warfare, especially in naval and air combat. This was a major failing of the book. Lastly, it made no discernible contribution to the literature.

Ellis Joffe's *The Chinese Army After Mao* also suffers from a lack of original source documentation. Joffe is regarded by his peers as the pioneer of PLA studies, and has been studying the People's Liberation Army for decades. The book looks at how the PLA was changing from a guerrilla force adhering to People's War doctrine to a professional military force equipped and trained to fight on the country's borders. The first four chapters cover this transition from Mao's 'man over machine' philosophy to one based on modern combined arms operations. The fifth chapter is devoted to weapons and equipment, the sixth on professionalising the military and the seventh on Deng Xiaoping's influence on the military. The fifth and sixth chapters would have benefited from a reading of *Bingqi Zhishi* (Ordnance Knowledge). As noted above, *Bingqi Zhishi* underwent its own transformation in that period from a training manual to a more sophisticated periodical discussing modern weapons technology, doctrine and topics such

44 . Joffe, E. *The Chinese Army After Mao*, Wedenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987; Segal, G. *Defending China*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984.

45 . The English language equivalent to *Bingqi Zhishi* is *International Defense Review*.

as information warfare. What otherwise would have been an excellent work was diminished by not consulting Chinese language sources.

From 1990 onwards the amount of literature available to scholars on the PLA has increased markedly but the amount translated into English has conversely shrunk. In the United States intelligence community, the FBIS is the primary source of translations and only translates books on special request; it translates approximately one percent of the open source Chinese military newspapers and very few magazines.⁴⁶ The FBIS reports were widely available to universities, but from 1997 they became unavailable to universities and other scholars of the PLA. This has meant translations of work on the PLA into English that are available to universities and other scholars have had to come from private translation services (often with little understanding of the material being translated) or by individuals themselves. An example of the latter is the author's *GI Zhou Newsletter*.

There was a 16-year gap between the publishing of a serious work on the PLA by a single author between Ellis Joffe's, *The Chinese Army After Mao* and David Shambaugh's *Modernizing China's Military*.⁴⁷ David Shambaugh is one of the most respected PLA specialists yet the work exhibits some major flaws and errors. Shambaugh writes about Chinese concerns regarding lessons learnt on Information Warfare and airpower from the 1991 Gulf War, the Air campaign over Kosovo and the Revolution in Military Affairs. There is an article in the September 1987 issue of *Bingqi Zhishi* (Ordnance Knowledge) titled *Xinxi zhan*, which translates as 'Battle on Information'. The article, written by a Yuan Wenlin, discusses command and control warfare, pre-emptive strikes, stealth, and hiding and camouflaging assets from the air. Here was an article written about all the concepts of air campaigns, command and control and information warfare in 1987 yet

46 . 'Michael Pilsbury in reply to a question', *Security Issues: Strategic Perceptions August 3, 2001, US-China Security Review Commission*, US Senate, Washington DC, pp.401 & 402.

47 . Shambaugh, D. *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems and Prospects*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2002.

this was not included.⁴⁸ The section on the PLA's modernisation of its land force equipment contains sufficient errors to detract from the work as a whole. The 'Doctrine and Training' chapter similarly discusses China's new airmobile infantry and its supposedly obsolescent helicopter force, yet fails to mention the Z-9 series of helicopters, licence built copies of the Eurocopter Panther 2, which are modern multi-role helicopters. Like Ellis Joffe's book, Shambaugh's *Modernizing China's Military* suffers from not consulting modern Chinese language military journals, such as *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang* (Tank and Armoured Vehicle), *Qing Binqi* (Light Weapons), and *Bingqi Zhishi*.

Shambaugh's work was followed by Andrew Scobell's *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March*.⁴⁹ This book is flawed most from the author's belief in the concept of People's War. His writing about People's War concentrates on the use of reserve, militia and civilian assets. It is no more than Australia would use in conflict on its own territory, and does practise on exercises; it did during operations in East Timor in 1999 and 2000. As a concept it is no different to other nations' use of these forces, examples being Switzerland, Sweden, Norway and Singapore. Indeed, Singapore uses the 'Total Defence' doctrine as does Israel - the Singapore Defence Forces' original instructors. The first use of a People's War doctrine in action in modern military history was Britain during the Second World War. The doctrine of holding the aggressor at the border, now under the aegis of 'active defence' appears to be a justification for an aggressive doctrine of pre-emptive strikes, and is the opposite of People's War. A positive aspect of Scobell's book is the chapter on the PLA during the Cultural Revolution, which is beyond anything published before, as is the chapter on the PLA during the Tiananmen Square protests. Particularly laudatory was identification of the weapons involved in the incident as a means of identifying the units involved, a method that should be employed more often. The Tiananmen chapter

48 . Yuan Wenlin. 'Xinxi zhan' (Battle on Information), *Bingqi Zhishi* Number 5/87, September 1987, p. 10.

49 . Scobell, A. *China's Use of Military Force: Beyond the Great Wall and the Long March*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003.

corroborates recent research that most of the killings occurred after the Square was emptied.

As a concept, People's War never related to PLA operations at the tactical level and was never used by the PLA. Reserve forces are to augment the main force units with logistics and the PLA has tried to improve on this area but it has to have its own integrated logistics, especially in mechanized units. The reserves and militia are only suitable for rear area security and the militia are counter-productive in operations outside their territorial areas.

Written works on the PLA between Joffe and Shambaugh have been edited works with each chapter written by a different PLA specialist. Mostly compilations of conference papers, they have suffered from the bias of the author or the organisation that sponsored the conference. For example, the Taiwanese, through the Council of Advanced Policy Studies, share the funding for the RAND PLA Conferences and thus it is not surprising that the PLA is perceived as a threat in some of the papers.⁵⁰ The biggest drawback with these writers is that many appear to have a limited knowledge of the early history of the PLA, and many have no military experience, thus lacking an understanding of the problems of the PLA from a military viewpoint.

A typical book of this type is *China's Military Faces the Future*, by James R. Lilley and David Shambaugh, working as joint editors.⁵¹ It suffers from being sponsored by a United States right-wing think tank, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, with most of the authors assuming China to be a threat. Chapter Five of the work, 'Foreign Arms Acquisition and PLA Modernization', and its Appendix, 'Gallery of

50 . For the funding of the CAPS/RAND PLA Conferences see, Pollack, J.D. 'CAPS and the Study of the PLA: A Review Essay', in Mulvenon, J.C. & Yang, A.N.D. (eds). *Seeking Truth From Facts: A Retrospective on Chinese Military Studies in the Post-Mao Era*, RAND, Santa Monica, 2001, p181.

51 . Lilley, J. R. & Shambaugh, D. (eds.) *China's Military Faces the Future*, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1999.

Known and Possible Future Foreign Acquisitions to China', creates the impression that the PLA is the new threat to US national interests. On the other hand, the chapter written by Michael Pilsbury, a China specialist with the United States Government, is more balanced in its approach. It attends to all sides of the debate on the PLA's future capability regarding the Revolution in Military Affairs and Information Warfare. The book suffers from being disjointed and provides no more than *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age* offers.⁵² The latter is arguably the best book to be written about the People's Liberation Army until Dennis Balsko's work (see below), covering the whole gambit of the PLA including naval and air forces, dispassionately. It identifies what is not known, and has the advantage of having five chapters written by ex-United States military China specialists, including three who served in China. In 1997, the United States National Defense University produced a book containing a series of small articles by senior PLA officers translated into English. Titled *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, and edited by Michael Pilsbury, it is divided into four parts: the 'Strategic Thought of Deng Xiaoping', 'Future Security Trends', 'Modernizing for Local War', and 'The Revolution in Military Affairs'.⁵³ The articles do not add new information or insights to the literature.

There were two significant Australian works that examined the doctrine of the PLA in this period. The first, by Rosita Dellios, was based on her doctoral thesis, and published as *Modern Chinese Defence Strategy: Present Developments, Future Directions*,⁵⁴ and the second was Ka Po Ng's doctoral thesis, *The Evolution of Chinese Local War Doctrine and China's Military Readiness in Asia*.⁵⁵ Dellios looked at both the influence of the

52 . Shambaugh, D. 'PLA Studies Today: A Maturing Field, in Mulvenon', J. & Yang, R.H. (eds.). *The People's Liberation Army in the Information Age*, RAND, Santa Monica, 1999, p. 9.

53 . Pilsbury, M. (ed). *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, National Defense University Press, Washington D.C., 1997.

54 . Dellios, R. *Modern Chinese Defence Strategy: Present Developments, Future Directions*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1989.

55 . Ka Po Ng. *The Evolution of Chinese Local War Doctrine and China's Military Readiness in Asia*, PhD Thesis, University of Queensland, St Lucia, October 1999.

western and classical Chinese (Sun Tzu) principles of war on PLA strategy and its conceptualisation of military affairs.⁵⁶ Unlike many other authors on the PLA, she included the capability of the weapons systems and their influence on strategy, and showed an understanding of the operational level of warfare as well as how history shaped the strategic view of the PLA, and not just Mao. She correctly identified that although the Soviet Union was viewed as China's prime threat it was the lack of development in China's western regions that was going to be the future threat to China.⁵⁷ Although Xinjiang's terrain allowed for mass armoured warfare, Dellios noted that its distance from China's major industrial and population centres meant that the Soviets were unlikely to use it to attack China.⁵⁸ Dellios also examined the possible use of 'nuclear guerrilla warfare'⁵⁹ by the PLA, which no other author has broached. The extensive use of Chinese source material throughout her work, and her idea of 'nuclear guerrilla warfare', means that this often overlooked work should be compulsory reading for students of the PLA when examining Chinese strategy during that period.

Ng looked at the influence of the Second Agrarian Revolutionary Period but misread some of the ideas that came from it, arguing that 'guerrillaism' (*youji zhuyi*) never left Chinese military doctrine. People's War entails mobilising the entire nation's resources for total war – typified by the British with its Home Guard, Royal Observer Corps, Air Raid Precaution and fire brigade volunteers. Ng's thesis argues that the personnel who had studied at Russian military academies, the Russian returned students (who became known as the 'Returned Student Faction') – with the exception of Liu Bochong who ran the Red Army's central Military Academy – were marginalised after the failure to halt the Guomindang's Fifth Extermination campaign; yet the philosophy of the operational level of war was part of the PLA's doctrine since the early days of the Peasants' and Workers'

56 . Dellios, *loc. cit.*, pp. 4, 11, 13 & 20.

57 . *Ibid.*, pp.115 & 116.

58 . *Ibid.*, p. 116.

59 . See *ibid.*, ch. 3, 'The Nuclear Guerilla'.

Red Army. Ng also wrote that training was neglected in People's War yet the available documents, especially the 'Bulletin of Activities' showed that training was paramount for company level and below.⁶⁰ He also neglected the fact, available in the late 1980s and later, that during the Cultural Revolution the power of the land force components of the PLA increased, due to the standardisation of armaments, which were relatively modern. The command, control and communications systems were not updated and the closing down of the military academies meant that combined operations were impossible. Local war, as a concept, is not described fully enough to add to the literature in the field. The over-reliance on Jonathan Pollack's 1980 work on People's War and Ellis Joffe's 1987 work on the PLA are two other major shortcomings.⁶¹

A 2003 work on the operational art of the PLA is *Chinese Warfighting*, edited by Mark Ryan, David Finkelstein and Michael McDevitt.⁶² Written mostly by staff at the Center for Naval Analysis and published by the Center it is a disappointing work. This is despite the authors being ex-soldiers. They display an absence of basic tactical knowledge or an understanding of the difficulties of high-altitude warfare when writing about Tibet. Even worse, drawing from a small sample of actual operational data they draw numerous conclusions, most of which amount to proper soldiering and expected of any professional force and staff officers.

In the Tibet chapter, Cheng Feng and Larry M. Wortzel fail to appreciate that the Chinese attacked at a company level. They achieved surprise at that level due to their sound infantry skills and the fact that the PLA high numbers of personnel and equipment in Tibet due to the Tibetan Insurgency. The chapter on the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), by looking at a small number of naval clashes, is over-stated. The naval battles around Hainan in 1950 and a series of minor naval clashes around Quemoy and Matsu, where the PLAN held the advantage of deploying in its own area of operations and

60 . Cheng, *op. cit.* p.

61 . Pollack, J. 'China as a Military Power', in Marwah, H. & Pollack, J. (eds.) *Military Power and Policy in Asian States: China, India and Japan*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1980.

62 . Ryan, M., Finkelstein, D. & McDevitt, M. *Chinese Warfighting : The PLA Experience Since 1949*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 2003.

superior numbers, is not a true reflection of its power. Similarly, sinking a Vietnamese transport ship and landing craft, and damaging another in 1988 by three frigates does not reflect whether the PLAN could have fought a more sophisticated navy. A single First World War destroyer or modern offshore patrol vessel could have caused the same degree of damage. The chapter on the People's Liberation Army Air Force gives a Chinese account of the PLAAF in combat and admits that air-to-surface capability was always neglected. It fails to look at the almost total lack of support to the PLA in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War and its loss of capability due to obsolescence of the total force.

As for the PLA's 1969 border clashes with the Soviet Union, no Russian sources are cited, and the syntax of Thomas Robinson's work suggests a literal translation of Chinese sources - too much use of the word 'determined' to describe the actions of the PLA. The work would have been better if it had not attempted to depict Chinese strategy and tactics as specifically Chinese, and focused more on how effective the Chinese were. Too much has been identified as People's War when it was more clearly a reflection of the standard of operational planning and staff work.

Dennis Blaskos's *The Chinese Army Today*, published in 2006,⁶³ is the heir to Harlan Jencks' *From Muskets to Missiles* and the definitive work on the PLA up to 2006. Like Jencks' work, it was written on the cusp of a transformation in the PLA: Jencks in the case of the restructuring following the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War; and Blasko with the informatisation and transformation of the PLA to fight for extended periods beyond its borders. Blasko was a United States army intelligence officer for 23 years, and was a defence attaché in both Beijing and Hong Kong. His book encompasses the whole gambit of the PLA from the lower to higher level organisations. The chapters are a series of questions – Chapter Two being 'What is the PLA?' and Chapter Five asking 'How will the PLA fight?'. Chapter Six looks at their equipment; training is covered in Chapter Seven. Other chapters examine the PLA's role in society, its demographic profile and the

63 . Blasko, D.J. *The Chinese Army Today Transformation and Tradition in the 21st Century*, Routledge, London, 2006.

geographic locations of its forces. Blasko has access to FBIS translations and uses these freely in his work, enabling him to give the best open source references since Jencks. If there is a fault in the book is that more could have been written about the envisaged changes in force structure and how they relate to Xinjiang and energy security.

Two primary conclusions may be drawn from the above survey. First, nearly all the literature neglects the operational level and how the capability of the weapons systems themselves have influenced the way the PLA fights. Second, and in accordance with the premise of this thesis, as Peoples' War was merely an idea - expressed as Maoist doctrine - but without a demonstrated basis in operational reality, the scholarship that examines the PLA from a People's War perspective is fundamentally flawed.

Attitudinal and Historical Background

*Haotie bu dading, haozhen bu dangbing*⁶⁴ translated as 'Good iron is not used to make nails, good sons should not become soldiers', expresses the disesteem by which soldiering was held in China generally up to the middle of the Twentieth Century. The army was regarded as an 'iron rice bowl' by petty criminals, opium smokers, bandits, vagabonds and the dregs of society who filled its lower ranks.⁶⁵ People joined up as soldiers to have their stomachs filled and the hope of a little money. Their loyalty was to their paymaster and this was especially so in the warlord armies of the early 1920s.⁶⁶ Prior to a conflict, warlords would publish a scale of rewards to opposing soldiers who

64 . It has also been translated as 'so good sons did not enlist for the battlefields'. Wong, C.S. *A Cycle of Chinese Festivities*, Malaysia Publishing House, Singapore, 1967, p. 97.

65 . Fung, E.S.K. *The military dimension of the Chinese revolution: The New Army and its role in the Revolution of 1911*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1980, pp. 22, 23, 108 & 109.

66 . The best work on the subject is Lary, Diana. *Warlord Soldiers: Chinese Common Soldiers, 1911-1937*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985.

deserted to them. The sliding scale would go from a private with his rifle all the way to a colonel with his battalion.⁶⁷

Confucian scholars looked down upon soldiers as the scholar was seen as superior, and the true gentlemen, in Chinese society.⁶⁸ Chinese armies rarely paid for anything they took from the peasants, and the soldiers were often no better than the bandits they were supposed to be thwarting.⁶⁹ Bandits held an unusual position in China. They were often mercenaries, for hire like many of the armies in the Hundred Years War in Europe. They worked for Chinese and foreigner alike, and many were involved in both criminal and political activities, notably anti-Manchu.⁷⁰ The government in power used the term 'bandit' to describe anti-government forces that were regarded by the ruling power as criminals. The Japanese used bandits in the Russo-Japanese War as partisan bands against the Russians,⁷¹ and the Guomindang referred to the Red Army and Communist forces as *gong fei* (communist bandits) even after they had retreated to Taiwan, well into the 1970s.

This public view of soldiers of lower rank is not exclusive to the Chinese. Kipling's poem, 'Tommy', about British soldiers showed the prevailing attitude of British society to the regular army's lower ranks in the Victorian and Edwardian period.⁷² The officers in the British Army of the time, with notable exceptions, came from the middle and upper classes and the other ranks from the lower classes.

67 . Fowler, J.S. 'Chinese Armies of the Present Day', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, Vol. LXXI, No. 482, May 1926, p. 360.

68 . Fung, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

69 . *Ibid.*, p. 109

70 . 'Military Notes on Foreign Armies – China', *Infantry Journal*, Vol. 29, November 1929, p. 584.

71 . *Ibid.*

72 . See Ricketts, H. *Rudyard Kipling: A Life*, Carrol & Gaff, New York, 1999, pp. 162 & 163. For the poem, 'Tommy', and others relating to military life, especially in colonial warfare and policing, see Kipling, R. *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Versus*, Fifteenth Edition, Methuen and Co, London, 1899. 'Tommy' is on pp. 6-9.

The encroachment of foreign powers on China's sovereignty was the unifying event in terms of upsetting all classes of China. What became known as the 'unequal treaties' saw the loss of parts of China; foreign residents in the ceded territories enjoyed extraterritoriality (they were not subject to the Chinese judicial system). Mostly on the Chinese coast, these areas included what became known as the treaty ports of Tientsin, the International and French Settlements in Shanghai and Hong Kong and its attendant New Territories. The foreign powers also demanded, and many times received, rights to build railways and mines in China's hinterland.⁷³ The rights of Christian missionaries in China and their converts also were seen as an affront. Roman Catholic priests were given the same rank as local magistrates and their converts were often given their protection.⁷⁴ Often these converts bullied and harassed the non-Christians with the protection afforded them by the local priests. The rise of Christianity and the abuses of power by some of the converts was one of the causes of the Boxer Rebellion (discussed below).

The origins of the organisation of the present infantry battalion can be traced back to the late Qing Dynasty. The Chinese Army in 1890 was in dire need of updating but its biggest problem, and one that continued up until the end of the Guomindang government in China, was provincialism. During the Qing, provincial governments had separate budgets to raise their own forces and were loathe letting the central government use them, lest they lose their power base. After the easy Japanese victories over Chinese forces in the 1894 Sino-Japanese War the Chinese government made its first serious effort to create a modern army.

73 . Norie, E.W.M. *History of the War in China 1900-1901*, Author's Proof, April 1902, pp. 2 - 4.

74 . *Ibid.*, p. 14.

In 1895 the Newly Created Army⁷⁵ (*Xinjian Lujun*), started to be formed under Yuan Shikai, and after four years of training it was sent to Shandong Province with the dual mission of putting down the Boxer Rebellion and thus curbing German expansion (in which the Boxers would be a pretext). Yuan Shikai had ensured that his army was not a threat to the peasants wherever they were and fostered a professional and disciplined military force. Their discipline and bearing were commented upon favourably, even with amazement by both Chinese and foreign observers.⁷⁶ After suppressing the Boxers in Shandong the Newly Created Army was deployed against German units in the outskirts of Tianjin, to stop them from advancing. This mission the Chinese deemed a success.⁷⁷ This 'success' against the Germans gained the respect of many Chinese towards the New Army.

The Newly Created Army was based around eight infantry battalions, supported by two artillery, two cavalry and one engineer battalion. Shortages in manpower, equipment and funds saw it organised around five infantry battalions, one artillery, one cavalry and one half-strength engineer battalion. What it lacked in numbers it made up in training and the quality of its men.⁷⁸

The infantry battalion contained four companies, each with three platoons, each with a headquarters and six squads of 17 men. Each squad had a squad leader, assistant squad leader, twelve fighting men, a cook and two coolies. Every officer had a sidearm, a revolver left turn and six bullets, and all the enlisted men except the coolies had a rifle. Each soldier carried 50 rounds for his rifle and both the revolver and rifle were of

75 . Taiwanese official documents refer to this as the 'Newly Established Army'. Collier, H.R. & Chin-Chih Lai, P. *Organizational Changes in the Chinese Army 1895-1950*, Office of the Military Historian, Taipei, 1969, p. 1.

76 . Fung, *loc. cit.*

77 . *Ibid.*, p. 23. This is not mentioned in Norie's history, which one would have expected, unless his forces were involved in turning back the First Relief Column.

78 . Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, pp. 1 & 2.

Austrian manufacture.⁷⁹ The platoon headquarters had three officers, five enlisted men and four coolies. A platoon at full strength had three officers, 95 of other ranks and 16 coolies; it was the size of an infantry company in most other armies.⁸⁰ The battalion at full strength had 60 men and 1,212 of other ranks.⁸¹

After the Wu-Xu *coup d'état* in 1898 the Qing government decided to again reorganize the Army into the *Wuwei yujun* (Fearless Defence Army). They still suffered from the same lack of training, pay, and personnel problems as their predecessors. The *Wuwei yujun* was split into four armies: the Front Defence Army which defended Ludai and Taku; the Hunan Army which became the Left Defence Army; the Kansu Army which was organized into the Rear Defence Army; and the Newly Created Army which became the Right Defence Army, responsible for defending Tianjin. A new Army was formed – the Central Defence Army which was responsible for defending Beijing.⁸² It had a unique organization that saw the Division split into the left and right two wings (brigades) with four battalions named the right, left, front and rear battalions, each with four large platoons again named the right, left, front and rear, each of nine squads that had a squad leader, 12 fighting men and one cook.⁸³

The Boxer Rebellion and the Creation of a Modern Chinese Army

The Boxer Rebellion was an uprising against foreigners and Christians in China in 1900 and 1901. The Foreign Legation in Beijing, which was the walled area where the foreign diplomats and their families lived, was besieged by the Boxer rebels with the tacit support of the Chinese Dowager Empress. If the Chinese military forces in the provinces

79 . *Ibid.*, p. 2.

80 . *Ibid.*, p. 4.

81 . *Ibid.*

82 . *Ibid.*, pp. 23 & 25.

83 . *Ibid.*, p. 23.

had come to the aid of the Beijing in 1900 with their modern artillery and Maxim machine guns, the forces of the Dowager Empress that were protecting the Imperial Court in Beijing and besieging the Foreign Legation could have easily defeated the forces in the Legation and the Second Relief Column. The first one relief column had already been turned back but the second one was far more powerful and organised.

The Second Relief Column only had one major battle with Imperial troops during its march to Beijing: at the town of Beicang on 5 August 1900. The Chinese were outflanked and after the bridge was captured in the town, turning their right flank, the Chinese forces retreated under artillery fire towards Yangcun.⁸⁴ Thoroughly demoralised, many deserted during the night. An assault the next day, by British and United States forces, captured the city of Yangcun.⁸⁵ The Chinese retreated from their defences with all their artillery. The Chinese defences were well constructed and could have held up the relief force if the defenders had stood firm and fought. The Imperial Chinese troops rarely stood and fought, and many military commentators noted that the Chinese would often retreat rather than fight, being masters of the strategic withdrawal. One reason was that they were often provincial troops, paid by the governor of their province, who did not want to lose his power base. The way to Beijing was now open and the relief force marched to the walls of Beijing, unmolested except for one or two minor skirmishes.⁸⁶ The defeat of the Chinese Army sent to stop the Second Relief Column to relieve the siege of the Legations in Beijing had far reaching effects.

84. Norie, *op. cit.*, pp. 69 & 70. The history when it came out in 1903 had deleted many of Norie's comments about the causes of the war, comments about the Imperial Court's intrigues, command and control problems between the forces involved in the relief, and the looting and massacres that occurred after the relief of the Legation. See Andrew, M.K. *Official but not history – Official rewriting of British military operations in the Boxer Rebellion*, presented at the Seventh Biennial Conference of the China Studies Association of Australia, Australian National University, 5 - 8 July 2001.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 70 & 71.

86. *Ibid.*, pp. 73 & 74.

Lack of firepower was not an obstacle either to the Chinese side. There were sufficient Maxim machine guns available to the Chinese government had they been released. In 1892, 18 Maxim machine guns were sent to commercial firms in Hong Kong, 15 in 1893, 34 in 1894 and 17 in 1895. These were for the provincial governors who had their own budgets. More importantly, a further 75 were sent to the Chinese government in 1895. All the Maxims sent to China from 1892 to 1895 were in .303-inch calibre except for 10 in 1895 that were in .45 inch Martini-Henry.⁸⁷ These would have more than sufficient to counter the Legation and the relief force.

In the Foreign Legation in Beijing there were only three machine guns, a hand operated Nordenfelt, a Model 1895 air-cooled 'gas hammer' machine gun and an Austrian 8mm Maxim that had been brought to the legation by the guard detachment of the Austrian cruiser *Zenta*.⁸⁸ The Second Relief Force was not as well armed when compared to the arms the Chinese Army could theoretically muster. There were 21 .303inch Maxim machine guns available with the British China Expeditionary Force, one for every infantry battalion and one privately purchased one in the 3rd Bombay Cavalry regiment.⁸⁹

The *Wuwei yujun* Front and Central Armies suffered heavily when they clashed with the Second Relief Force. After the sacking of Beijing and the loss of more land to the foreigners, the Qing government finally realised a modern national army was required throughout China. Yuan Shikai was sent from Shandong to Hubei with the mission to create what was known as the Beiyang New Army. He restructured the infantry battalion by reducing the size of the headquarters at every level and cutting the size of the platoon to half in peacetime.

87. Goldsmith, D.F. & Stevens, B.R. *The Devil's Paintbrush: Sir Hiram Maxim's Gun*, Collector Grade Publications, Toronto, 1989, p. 323.

88. *Ibid.*, p. 324.

89. Norie, *op.cit.*, pp. 109 & 204;

On 12 September 1904, the Beiyang New Army was officially sanctioned. It was composed of two different units, the Land (general for empire) Forces and the Reserve Forces (or Provincial Troops).⁹⁰ The provincial troops were former members of the New Army; they were expected to return to their province on completion of their service in the army. The division had two brigades, each having two regiments of three battalions each. An infantry battalion contained four infantry companies and in peacetime had paper strength of 659 men and in wartime 1, 240 men. Many of the units were under strength. Each company contained three platoons that in peacetime had three squads each of 14 soldiers and in wartime six squads.⁹¹ The squad consisted of a squad leader, assistant squad leader, four private first class and eight privates. The platoon headquarters had one officer and two other ranks and the company headquarters had one officer, one warrant officer and two Sergeants First Class. There were also eight cooks most likely spread out between the platoons.⁹² The rifles and artillery were Japanese.⁹³

In 1906 the Department of the Army was created and in August 1907 the Qing government ordered that the entire army was to be reorganised into 36 divisions using the Beiyang New Army division as the model.⁹⁴ The major changes at the lower level were as an increase in the company of ten other ranks and the incorporation of a machine gun company at the regimental level. To complicate the logistics even more, the Department of the Army, which controlled all of China's arsenals, ordered that the units be equipped with weapons from these arsenals.⁹⁵ Self-sufficiency was an excellent idea but the

90 . Brunnert, H.S. & Hagelstrom, V.V. *Present Day Political Organization of China*, Foochow, 1911, p. 285

91 . *Ibid.*, 288.

92 . Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, pp. 32 & 42.

93 . *Ibid.*, p. 33.

94 . *Ibid.*

95 . *Ibid.*

weapons produced by the arsenals were rarely standardised and often the weapons could not share their parts. Moreover, the arsenals could not produce enough weapons for the forces in its province let alone produce sufficient for sale. In the first two decades of the Twentieth Century, the only arsenal that could do this reliably was the Hanyang arsenal in Hubei Province.⁹⁶

This lack of standardisation became the major problem of the all Chinese Armies henceforth and was only fixed in the late 1960s. This structure up to the Regimental level was what the warlords, Guomindang and Red Army nominally used in the 1920s and into the 1930s. It was aimed to have this new structure throughout the army by 1913, but at the time of the 1911 Revolution only 23 divisions had been reorganised as some provinces had not done as directed.⁹⁷

The Revolution of the 1911, which led ultimately to the end of the Qing Dynasty, saw the army break up into different factions. In time, these factions became part of the Revolutionary Army under Sun Yat-sen, and although Yuan Shikai initially stayed loyal to the Qing Government, he eventually sided with the Guomindang. Yuan Shikai became the provisional president and after the Guomindang in the new parliament was writing a new constitution, purged the Guomindang while establishing himself as the paramount leader power. He even entertained thoughts of becoming the new emperor in the Japanese style. By taking loans from the Japanese in exchange for trading and investment rights in China and Manchuria (known as the Twenty-One Demands), Yuan Shikai saw the country slide into what became known as the Second Revolution. Sun Yat-sen fled to Japan and started to create a new political organization and force - the 'Revolutionary Army'.

Yuan Shikai died in 1916 and China descended came under the control of various warlords who were nominally part of the government, but were a law unto themselves.

96 . Curtis, L. *The Hanyang Arsenal*, GIG Concepts, San Antonio, 2000, p. 2.

97 . Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 32; Brunnert & Hagelstrom, *loc.cit.*

Zhang Xun, now that Yuan was dead, used his army to try and re-establish the Qing by leading a counter-revolution in 1917 with his small army of Qing loyalists. They installed Pu Yi as emperor on 1 July 1917, and China was theoretically ruled by the Manchus for 11 days until the other local warlords attacked and re-established a republic in Beijing. Pu Yi still remained in the imperial palace at government expense, as being eleven years of age, was not part of the coup.

Duan Qirui, who had been Yuan Shikai's deputy, gained control of Beijing and declared war on Germany. He took secret loans from Japan, for even more concessions than Yuan Shikai, including the rights to Germany's ex-posessions in China. These also included letting Japan station troops in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. When these agreements were found out in 1919, during the Versailles Treaty negotiations, the Chinese people were enraged and on 4 May 1919, after riots over these concessions broke out in Beijing, what became known as the May Fourth Movement spread throughout China and even to Singapore.⁹⁸ Some of the leaders of the May Fourth Movement were to become involved in China's politics in the 1920s.

China descended into a convoluted series of battles in which the warlords contended for power, with Duan Qirui and Zhang Zhuolin holding power jointly in Beijing and nominally for all of China. The period of the warlords had started in China. Some of these warlords commanded armies of over 100,000 men, well equipped and trained whereas others were little more than bandit gangs. During the period 1917 to 1926, many large conflicts occurred among these warlords. Notable wars in southern China were the Guangdong-Guangxi and Hunan-Hubei Campaigns and the battles between the Szechuan warlords.⁹⁹ Eventually there emerged in Northern China five prominent groups who fought two major battles in April-May 1922 and October 1926 for the control of Beijing. The groups were led by Zhang Zuolin, Wu Peifu, Yan Xishan, Feng Yuxiang and Zhang Congchang. Many warlords were eventually killed: Zhang Congchang was shot by the

98. *Straits Settlements Annual Report 1919*, Government Printer, Singapore, 1921, p. 210.

99. Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

adopted son of a man he murdered. or in Zhang Zuolin's case blown up in his train by the Japanese.¹⁰⁰ Others became nominally part of the regular Guomindang Army as in the case of Feng Yuxiang and Yan Xishan.¹⁰¹

Sun Yat-sen had slipped back into China in 1916 and in 1917 had formed a parliament meant as a rival to Beijing, but even though he declared himself Generalissimo, he was still only there with the blessing of the local warlords.¹⁰² In 1918 his forces and he moved to Shanghai in 1918 as warlord forces had started attacking his men.¹⁰³ Never beaten, in May 1922 he led forces composed of the Guangdong, Jiangxi and Yunnan armies against the warlords in Jiangxi, which became known as the First Northern Expedition.¹⁰⁴ However in June he had to return to Guangdong as the local warlords led by Chen Jiongmeng launched a counterattack.¹⁰⁵ Sun Yat-sen's home was surrounded on 17 June by soldiers of the warlord Yeh Chu, and he escaped by gunboat with his wife and bodyguards.¹⁰⁶ He rebuilt his forces in Guangdong. Discovering that his forces lacked organisation and training, he established the Whampoa Academy with Comintern assistance, which provided military advisors and created the Revolutionary Army. A new chapter in China's history had begun.

100 . Spence, J. & Chin, A. *The Chinese Century*, Harper-Collins, London, 1996, pp. 56 & 92.

101 . Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, pp. 136 -138. A sound explanation of the balance of power issues and the control of opium can be found in Wakeman, F. *Policing Shanghai*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, pp.120 and 327 & 328 note 78.

102 . Fairbank, J.H. & Reischauer, E.O. *China, Tradition and Transformation*, Allen & Unwin, North Sydney, 1979, pp. 424 & 426.

103 . *Ibid.*, p. 426.

104 . Collier and Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p.72.

105 . *Ibid.*

106 . *British Foreign Office FO 371/8012 dated 9 August 1922*, 'Extract from Consular Intelligence Reports Apr-June 1922 Southern China – Political events in Kwantung and Kiangsi'. The file noted that Sun Yat-sen's bodyguard carried 'Thompson guns' (Thompson sub-machine guns).

The Soviet Union wielded enormous influence on the nascent Chinese Communist Party and the early years of the Whampoa Academy and National Revolutionary Army. The Soviets ordered the Chinese Communist Party to join as a group inside the Guomindang, creating the first United Front. The need for a Communist army was recognised after previously sympathetic warlords killed Communist leaders organising railway labour unions.

Was There a Possibility of an Operational Art at the Time?

Although Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* was written in 500 BCE, and presumably well read in China, warlord armies had shown themselves incapable of bold manoeuvres – due as much to poor staff work as their almost complete lack of any means of logistics. Most warlords were content to work on a balance-of-power concept and would withdraw from an area after only one large battle. Allegiances could never be guaranteed either. Thus although there were large numbers in many forces, most ended up using frontal assaults or trying to entice another warlord into battle. Intrigue was often the main operational manoeuvre. It was not until the Guomindang's Great Northern Expedition that any Chinese military force had an integral logistic force.

The major transportation systems in China up until the mid-1950s were water and rail. Major roads hardly existed outside the Treaty Ports and the major cities of Beijing and Nanjing. These rarely extended more than a few kilometres outside their walls.¹⁰⁷ In the Yangtze and Yellow River deltas the land was cut up due to levies, irrigation ditches and transport waterways. The major roads were nothing more than tracks that could only use pack animals and movement was in single file.¹⁰⁸ Peasants, mostly coerced but sometimes paid and known as kulis (coolies in Cantonese), were used for the shipping of

107 . In Guangdong this was 10 to 15 kilometres at best. Wilbur, C.M. & How, J.L.Y. *Missionaries of Revolution: Soviet Advisors and Nationalist China 1920-1927*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1989, p. 604.

108 . Fowler, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

supplies for the armies.¹⁰⁹ Railroads were the primary means of moving personnel rapidly, and their control militarily significant. Many of the railway lines were foreign owned and the staff of the warlord armies unable to grasp the complexities of railway movement. After defeats, the railways could be blocked due to inept handling of the rolling stock and locomotives.¹¹⁰

Whitson noted that railway lines were of strategic importance especially the railways from Shenyang to Beijing and Tianjin; the Beijing-Hankou line, the Tianjin-P'uk'ou line; the Lung-hai line from the east coast to Xian and the line northward from Guangzhou. He dismissed the railways for battle as most of the battles were away from the lines and soldiery was expected to live off the land - that is, appropriating the resources of the peasantry. One of the warlords did employ the railways as means of manoeuvre and as a means of combat. Zhang Congchang at the end of 1926 had four armoured trains manned by 'White' (anti-communist) Russian mercenaries and even had a pontoon to cross rivers to outflank other warlord armies.¹¹¹ However, Zhang Congchang's efforts were an isolated case and were not representative of an operational art emerging at that time. It was not until soon after - the period 1928-1937 - following the Soviet Union's doctrine of operational theory, that the modern Chinese military's operational art began.

109 . *Ibid*; Wilbur & How, *op. cit.*, pp. 604 & 605;

110 . Fowler, *op. cit.*, pp. 360 & 363.

111 . *Foreign Office File, China General Correspondence, Peking Legation Papers FO 228, 1912-1928*, Bertram Giles to Lampson, FO 228/3451, Nanjing, 30 December 1926. Both sides in the 1919-1920 Russian Civil War made extensive use of armoured trains to provide mobile firepower. Addendum 1: What's in a Name/ Russian Civil War Armored Train Names' in Koenig, A.R. 'Glass-jawed Coliaths: Red Army Artillery Trains in World War II', *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 4, December 2001, pp. 152 – 157; Kopenhagen, W. *Armored Trains of the Soviet Union 1917-1945*, Schiffer Military History, Atglen 1986, *passim*.

Chapter One

Creation of a Red Army: The Arming of the Chinese Communist Party 1919-1927

Prior to the Nanchang Uprising on 1 August 1927 there was no independent Chinese Communist Army. This is not to say that there were no armed members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). There were members of the CCP inside the Guomindang and at the Whampoa Military Academy. They followed the instructions from the Comintern, the external arm of the Soviet Communist Party. By working within the Guomindang and as part of the Whampoa Academy the military organisation and training of the early Chinese Communist Party was nurtured. The Whampoa Academy was set up in Guangzhou in 1924 by Sun Yat-sen with the aim of indoctrinating and training officers to take control of China.¹¹²

It was not the Chinese Communist Party that started nationalist and anti-foreigner organisations in China after the First World War. Initially anarchist groups formed them, as part of the May Fourth Movement, a series of violent anti-government demonstrations that were a result of Japan taking over ex-German concessions under the Versailles Treaty. The Chinese Communist Party soon supplanted them and started organising unions in the early 1920s, notably in Canton and Shanghai. This included the International Settlement in Shanghai, which gave Chinese Communist Party cadres, outside of the Whampoa Academy, the experience and base to create an armed force. These enabled the creation of worker's pickets enforcing the strike against the British in Hong Kong and Canton following the Shaji Massacre and the takeover of Shanghai by workers' pickets in 1927, prior to the arrival of Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition.

¹¹² . Spence. & Chin, *op.cit.*, pp. 68 & 70.

A considerable gap presents itself in the history of Chinese communism, as there were Chinese who served with the ChEKA (the Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-revolution, Sabotage and Speculation) during the Russian Civil War.¹¹³ Further, Lenin himself maintained a 200-strong bodyguard comprised of 70 Chinese and 130 Hungarians.¹¹⁴ The biggest question is why there is no record of them in CCP documents from the 1920s. It is difficult to imagine the CCP not lauding these Chinese internationalists. They were not intellectuals and have left very little material on what they did. One is an article from 1957 by Li Xingpei.¹¹⁵ The article is on Li Fuqing, who along with two cousins was tricked into going to Russia in April 1916 to work in factory but who were instead used to clear forests and build a railway. He joined the Red Army in 1917 and after being wounded four times he became one of Lenin's bodyguards in 1919.¹¹⁶ After the war, he studied in the Russia Cultural University and joined the Russian Communist Party Youth Group in 1923; in the same year he was sent to a military college.¹¹⁷ Upon completing his studies he worked as an interpreter in a Russian mine using Chinese workers. When Japan invaded Manchuria in 1933 he was deported to south-western China near the Afghan border, where he lived in exile until 1950. He joined the Chinese People's Liberation Army after returning from exile in 1950.¹¹⁸

Radkey in his 1976 work wrote:

113 . Khvostov, M. *The Russian Civil War (1): The Red Army*, Osprey, London, 1996, p. 41.

114 . The vast majority, if not all of the Hungarians, were recruited from among Austro-Hungarian POWs. *Ibid.*, pp. 41 & 42. Li Xingpei. 'Liening de Zhongguo wei shi Li Fuqing', *Hong qi piao pia*, Vol. 4, 1957, p. 71. Some may have gone home in 1919 to help Bela Hun and the still-expected international uprising. Some Hungarian Communists did become Soviet citizens, possibly after first having gone home and then escaping Kun's collapse, or perchance never having gone home.

115 . Li Xingpei, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-86.

116 . *Ibid.*, pp. 57 & 71.

117 . *Ibid.*, p. 86.

118 . *Ibid.*

The notion that the Soviets used Mongol or Mongolian troops for repressive purposes has surfaced repeatedly. It seems to have died a hard death. The Mongols are a small people and could not have possibly committed all the nefarious actions attributed to them. If the range is widened, however, to include Chinese, Turko-Tartars and Finno-Ugrians, we move from the realm of fiction into that of fact. The Soviet regime unquestionably derived strength from their bruised feelings.¹¹⁹

With access to Soviet archives since the fall of the Soviet Union and further accurate material, Khvostov in 1996 wrote: 'The Chinese had special value to the Bolsheviks: industrious, efficient and seldom able to understand Russian, they were employed by the ChEKA for the arrest and execution of anti-Soviet elements.'¹²⁰ In 1997 he further observed: 'So great was the threat posed by Antonov's Army that the Soviets treated it as a new front, and sent against it their best commanders, Tukhachevsky and Uborevich, with nearly 50,000 regulars as well as Hungarian and Chinese 'Internationalists' and ChEKA, ChON and VOkhr units.'¹²¹

It is unlikely that many of the Chinese in the ChEKA actually came from China to support the Red Army. The Whites (Russian anti-Soviet forces nominally Pro-Tsarist) controlled much of the Urals, Central Asia and the Far East. Bringing Chinese internationalists to the area around Moscow would have been difficult and hardly worth the effort. As mentioned earlier, there was Chinese conscript labour in Russia,¹²² and

119 . Radkey, O.H. *The Unknown Civil War in Soviet Russia: A Study of the Green Movement in the Tambov Region 1920-1921*, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1976, p. 134, fn. 48.

120 . Khvostov, *op. cit*, p. 41.

121 . Khvostov, M. *The Russian Civil War (2): White Armies*, Osprey, London, 1997, p. 40.

122 . Li Xingpei, *op.cit.*, p. 61.

there would have been ethnic Chinese from territories acquired when Imperial Russia took over parts of the Far East, Maritime Provinces, and Eastern Turkestan. Some may have been subjects of the Tsar since the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk at the beginning of the reign of Peter the Great. Some of these people moved westward as merchants, and/or tea growers and Chinese were brought to the Caucasus to found and manage tea plantations established there.

Turning back from developments in Eurasia to China proper, in 1919, as noted above, an anarchist organisation began urban action against foreign and capitalist interests in Shanghai. The International Settlement authorities regarded the street unions that they formed as Bolshevik, yet there was only mention of anarchist literature on the October 10 Revolution Anniversary Celebrations in 1920.¹²³ This ties in with the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP) reports of the time. Bolshevism rated only one paragraph in its 1919 report, mentioning the seizing of Bolshevik books in the Settlement and a small paragraph reporting the arrival of Russian refugees into the Settlement from Siberia.¹²⁴ The 1920 report devoted only one paragraph to Bolshevism and one to local Russian politics.¹²⁵ It was not until August 1920 that the first Communist group in China was formed in Shanghai.¹²⁶

The suppression of nationalist and communist movements in the International Settlement was the responsibility of the Political Section of Central Intelligence Division (CID) that later became the Special Branch of the Shanghai Municipal Police, under the command

123 . Foreign Office 371 *Foreign Office Correspondence, original, 1906 – 153, Far East – China, FO371/6602 F 76/34/10 dated 25 October 1920*, ‘Distribution of Anarchist Leaflets in Shanghai’; ‘Bolshevism etc in China, SIB Report for October 1920 dated 7 November 1920’.

124 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1919*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1920, p. 66A .

125 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1920*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1921, pp. 69A & 70A.

126 . *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi zilao huiban: Lingdao jigao yange he chengyuan*, Zhonggong Zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, Beijing, 1995, p. 2.

of a Deputy Commissioner. It was formed in October 1917 as a separate squad of the CID 'to deal with a special phase of crime'.¹²⁷ It was responsible for 'watching and reporting on all political, quasi-political and politico-religious movements, on the activities of political associations and labour organisations, political and other meetings, and on the activities of the Press, and for conducting inquiries of a political nature'.¹²⁸ It was Special Branch's responsibility to provide intelligence of impending political trouble and in the event of it, to keep the SMP informed of developments.¹²⁹ This meant that the Shanghai Municipal Police took an active interest in any organisation or event that could disturb the running of the Settlement. This ranged from agitation to paying rent, the cost of rice or boycotts of foreign goods, to political parties such as the Guomindang and the Communist Party.

It was not until the 1921 Annual Report that Communism proper became a concern. Nonetheless, street unions, the price of rice, house rents and Chinese representation on the Shanghai Municipal Council took up two-and-a-half pages as opposed to just over half a page devoted to 'social extremists', the Guomindang and Bolshevism.¹³⁰ The report revealed that the Chinese Communist Party was growing in strength and the police were attempting to suppress it. In that year four publishers of Communist material were successfully prosecuted and the SMP raided the May Day committee before it could stage a demonstration.¹³¹ The Political Section of Central Intelligence Division of the SMP had by the end of 1921 collected 27 different types of communist leaflets and handbills since 1919, but these were a failure as they were aimed primarily at workers and soldiers who, for the most part, could not read.¹³²

127 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1919*, p. 49A .

128 . Widdowson, W.H. *Police Guide and Regulations. 1938*, Shanghai Municipal Police, Shanghai, 1938, p. 352.

129 . *Ibid.*

130 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1921*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1922, pp. 58A - 61A.

131 . *Ibid.*

132 . *Ibid.*

It is worth noting that although the Chinese Communist Party was perceived as a threat, the 'communist literature' was in reality anarchist. The CCP upon its formation consisted of only 53 members in seven groups in China and one in Japan.¹³³ It was not until the Second Congress in July 1922 that it even had a stable Party organisation.¹³⁴ Its members had by then grown to 195 for the whole of China.¹³⁵ In the period 1922 to 1924 the Shanghai Municipal Police were active in suppressing communist groups in the International Settlement of Shanghai. As it was a cell within the Guomindang it was difficult to isolate it from the Guomindang proper. Indeed the Shanghai Municipal Police, and the European population in Shanghai, did not view them at the time as different, both being desirous of the removal of foreign privileges in China.

On 8 June 1922 the Shanghai Municipal Police raided a series of houses in Taku Road, on the grounds that they were being used as the headquarters of a number of societies including the Marx Literature Research Society.¹³⁶ The rooms, later revealed to be a front for the Guomindang, contained a library of 388 'extremist' books in Chinese, English, Japanese, French and German.¹³⁷ The next day the Labour Secretariat in Chendu Road was closed down as its journal, *The Labourer's Weekly*, was said to have printed inflammatory articles, and the Secretariat was accused of inciting postal workers to strike.¹³⁸ Constant surveillance by the SMP saw a marked decline in communist propaganda and activities in the International Settlement in 1923.¹³⁹ The following year,

133 . *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi zilao huiban*, op. cit., p. 9.

134 . *Ibid.*, p. 247

135 . Dirlik, A. *The Origins of Chinese Communism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1989, p. 250.

136 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1922*, p. 77a.

137 . *Ibid; Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1924*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1925, p. 55 .

138 . *Ibid.*

139 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1923*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1924, p. 48.

1924, saw a resurgence in demonstrations and conferences, albeit peaceful, with communist, anti-foreign and Guomindang speeches; but no action was taken against them. Obviously the Shanghai Municipal Police had them under surveillance. This is not to over-estimate the size of the Chinese Communist Party during this period. It had 420 members in June 1923, rising to 994 in January 1925.¹⁴⁰ The May 30 incident however saw membership increase rapidly to 2,223 by August 1926.¹⁴¹ This is still a small number when compared to the size of the Guomindang and China itself. The increase would also have been due to the 365 Chinese students that had recently graduated and returned from the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in the Soviet Union.¹⁴²

Working Within the Guomindang, Soviet Assistance and the Whampoa Academy

The Comintern sent agents to China in 1919 to identify prospective leaders and labour activists and in 1921 these agents assisted in the setting up of the Chinese Communist Party. In 1922 they identified that the best way that China would have a revolution was through the Guomindang. Although the Guomindang was not necessarily communist in ideology, they were an indigenous anti-imperialist and anti-feudal group, which fitted in with the Comintern's aims. To ensure that they followed the correct Party line the Comintern instructed the nascent Chinese Communist Party to become a 'bloc within', work with the Guomindang, and became known as the 'United Front'.¹⁴³

140 . *Zhongguo gongchandang zuzhi shi zilao huiban: Lingdao jigao yange he chengyuan, op. cit.* p. 27.

141 . *Ibid.*, p. 34.

142 . Written note on the file cover of *Foreign Office FO 371/10942 F265/194/10* dated 30 November 1924, 'Soviet propaganda in the Far East'.

143 . Schram, S.R. (ed) *Mao's Road to Power Revolutionary Writing 1912.1949, Volume II*

The Chinese Communist Party had identified the need for armed action to aid the revolution after the 7 February 1923 incident where three warlords, who were previously sympathetic to workers, attacked railway workers who were forming a General Union of the Beijing-Hankou Railway.¹⁴⁴ This resulted in the deaths of between 30 and 35 workers and many more wounded. The Comintern had been pressuring the Chinese Communist Party to work with the Guomindang since April 1922. Although the CCP at its Second Congress had agreed to work with them, it balked at joining the Guomindang. The February 7 Massacre, as it is called in CCP documents, revealed how weak the Chinese labour movement was by itself, and the need of Sun Yat-sen's support. On 25 June 1923, after the Third Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, Mao Zedong, Chen Duxiu, Li Dazhao, Cai Hesen and Tan Pingshan signed a communication to Sun Yat-sen that 'to oppose and overcome "feudal warlords", the Guomindang must establish a new-style "centralised national-revolutionary" army to fight them.'¹⁴⁵

From there the CCP worked with the Guomindang for an armed revolution in China. The Whampoa Academy was established to train and create an army to unite China. The Guomindang's Special Party Organisation was formed to instil Party ideology and teach the army what it was fighting for. The head of the Academy was Chiang Kai-shek, and Zhou Enlai headed the Special Party Organisation for political training. Military and political advisors from the Soviet Union aided them.¹⁴⁶ This came as a result of a series of letters and discussions between Adolf Joffe and Sun Yat-sen (through members of the Chinese Communist Party as part of the United Front), whereby Sun Yat-sen signed an agreement with Joffe on 26 January 1923. Known as the Sun Yat-sen-Joffe Declaration,

National Revolution and Social Revolution December 1920-June 1927, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1992, pp. xxviii & xxxi.

144 . For a detailed account see Pantsov, A. *The Bolsheviks and the Chinese Revolution 1919-1927*, Curzon, Surrey, 2000, pp. 30 – 70 *passim*.

145 . 'Letter to Sun Yatsen dated 25 June 1923' in Schram, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

146 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

it promised Soviet support for Sun's struggle for national unification and full independence.¹⁴⁷ This came in the form of advisors, funds, and munitions under the control of General Vasily Blyukher.

In October 1924, the Training (Indoctrinated) Regiment of the Whampoa Academy was created. Its organisation was three rifle battalions of three rifle companies of three platoons of three squads. The squads comprised one squad leader, an assistant and ten enlisted men. There were a total of two officers and 36 enlisted men and the company headquarters had four officers and 24 enlisted men. In the battalion there were a total of 24 officers and 401 enlisted men. At the regimental level there was a machine gun company with six French air-cooled machine guns that became over-heated and jammed after 300 rounds. There were also transportation, reconnaissance, communication, and medical detachments and a special service company. The officers had 'broomhandle Mausers' and the enlisted men had either a Japanese rifle in 6.5 mm or a locally made 7.92 mm bolt action rifle.¹⁴⁸

In December 1924 the Second Indoctrinated (Training) Regiment was formed and the Party Army became a brigade in size. Based on interviews there were only 1,200 combatants in the first regiment in December 1924 with the establishment being 179 officers and 1,835 enlisted men. Further, they were all armed with 7.92 mm rifles made at the Canton Arsenal.¹⁴⁹ In July 1925 the Canton Government was superseded by the forming of the National Government. At the same time the Party Army and certain local units were combined to form the National Revolutionary Army. On 20 August 1925 the brigade was enlarged to two divisions. The brigade had three regiments, as did the division. The First Infantry Division had three regiments, an artillery battalion, a military police battalion and an engineer battalion. There was a shortage of men and materiel. The Second Infantry Division had only two regiments whilst the Third Infantry Division,

147 . Pantsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 57 & 58.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

149 . *Ibid.*, note 2, p. 78.

made up of units from the Guangdong Army, comprised three regiments and a replacement regiment. The biggest change was the addition of a machine gun company in each rifle battalion containing six machine guns.

The Guomindang started to receive increased aid from the Soviet Union and in 1926 it received seven 76.2 mm mountain guns, 103 machine guns, nine 37 mm Model 15 'Rosenburg' infantry guns, 40 bomb throwers, seven million German and 1.3 million Japanese cartridges amongst other materiel.¹⁵⁰ They were supplied after a Soviet advisor reported in June 1925 that the rifles and machine guns in the Party Army ranged from 'obsolete to modern, with very few of the latter'.¹⁵¹ Outside of the cities there were only narrow footpaths which meant that all supplies had to be moved by *kulis* (manual-workers) in single file; pack artillery was the only artillery that could be moved.

The Gun is Subordinate to the Party, the Export of Ideology and the May 30 Incident

Beginning in September 1924, the Guomindang forces had, in addition to the Party organisation, a Party representative assigned to all headquarters from company level up. The orders issued by any commander were valid only if the Party representative had countersigned them.¹⁵² This kept control of the army in the event of a commander deciding to rebel against the Party or wanting to make the army the preserve of himself, that is, 'warlordism'. In times of need the Party representative could assume control of the unit he was assigned, thus the commander of the unit was only responsible for the training. This was how the army in the Soviet Union was controlled by the Communist Party and reflected the views of the Russian advisors to the Guomindang. Loyalty to the Party was synonymous with loyalty to the nation and thus loyalty to the National

150 . J.A.J. 'The Futility of the Arms Embargo', *China Weekly Review*, Vol. XLIII, 11 February 1928, p. 269.

151. Wilbur, & How, , *op. cit.*, p. 607.

152 . Collier & Cin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

Revolutionary Army, as it was called, in July 1925. This was when the Canton Government was superseded by the National Government, and the Party Army as well as certain local Guangdong units, were formed into the National Revolutionary Army.

The Military Council was set up at the same time with the role to be in charge of all Army units. At the time of the First Eastern Expedition, January 1925, the Political Department of the Whampoa Academy was divided into forward and rear area sections with Zhou Enlai in charge of the former. After the expedition it became the Political Department of the Army and thus organic to it. In July 1926 it was reorganised as the General Political Department becoming the General Political Department subordinate to the General Headquarters of the National Revolutionary Army. It was organised into the Propaganda, General Affairs and Party Affairs (organisation) sections.¹⁵³ The propaganda units preceded the Second Northern Expedition and were an unqualified success. By the time the Northern Expedition had reached the Yangtze River it had absorbed 34 warlord armies and expeditions.¹⁵⁴

To increase the martial spirit and political ideology in the Party Army, teams or 'cells' were made in every squad, and at the staff section level. In the eyes of the Party, all were equal, and members were able to make suggestions and express their opinions without restriction. Its members elected the leader of the cell.¹⁵⁵ The use of 'cells' was the cornerstone of political training in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and continued in use when it became the People's Liberation Army at the beginning of the Civil War in 1946. The Political Department, having been under Zhou Enlai from its beginnings at the Whampoa Academy, was the means whereby the Communists influenced the Guomindang. It was deactivated in March 1927 due to the split with the Soviet Union and the expelling and killing of Communists during the White Terror.¹⁵⁶

153 . *Ibid.*

154 . Fairbank, J.K. & Reischauer, E.O. *China Tradition & Transformation*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1979, pp. 449 & 450.

155 . Collier & Cin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

156 . *Ibid.*

From then on, the influence of the German advisors to the Guomindang came to the fore.¹⁵⁷

Another factor in the international dimension of the Chinese communist movement is the export of its ideology south to Singapore and Malaya, and not only the importation of ideas from the north. The link between the Guomindang, and the anarchist and communist movements in Shanghai and Singapore, was reported in February 1923 when it was discovered that all these groups used American Post Office Box Number 913 in Shanghai to send material to Malaya.¹⁵⁸ The Shanghai Municipal and Straits Settlement Police Force's Detective Branches were in contact with each other on this matter, and there were no major acts of violence or overt disobedience aimed at the police or other government organs in both settlements by communist or anarchist groups until 1925.

The first act of violence was the bombing of the Chinese Protectorate by a Chinese anarchist on 23 January 1925 which galvanised the Straits Settlement's government into overt action.¹⁵⁹ The local branch of the Anarchist Society was not involved, but the mass arrests and banishment of known anarchists as a result of the bombing effectively destroyed it.¹⁶⁰ The bombing coincided with a considerable increase in Chinese communist literature arriving in Singapore, and Malaya, for Hailams (the name used at the time for people from Hainan) living there.¹⁶¹ Raids on Hailam night schools during this time were fruitful. One raid found letters from Hailams who had left Singapore in February for the Whampoa Military Academy. All these connections with political

157 . *Ibid.*

158 . Colonial Office 537, *Original supplementary correspondence for colonial and non-colonial countries, 1872-1952*, CO 537/909/*Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence February 1923 dated 7 February 1923.*

159 . CO 537/930, *MBPI*, No. 26 dated March 1925.

160 . Yong, C.F. *The Origins of Malayan Communism*, South Seas Society, Singapore, 1997, pages 14 to 40, gives the history of the anarcho-communist group in Singapore and Malaya.

161 . CO 537/931, *MBPI*, No. 28 dated April 1925.

groups were compounded by the May 30 Incident in the International Settlement in Shanghai.

The May 30 Incident became central to the growth of the Chinese Communist Party and anti-foreign sentiment in China, and was initiated by a series of strikes and demonstrations in early February 1925 against Japanese-owned mills, after the dismissal of 40 employees and the subsequent imprisoning of six of them. The strikes peaked with mass arrests by the Shanghai Municipal Police, and the shooting of strikers by Japanese employees when they broke into the factory, leading to a procession by students on 30 May 1925 in honour of the dead worker. This procession in the International Settlement that ended with the rushing of the Louza Police Station in Nanking Road by some of the students in the procession. They were shot down by SMP Sikh and Chinese constables, which resulted in 12 students being killed and 17 wounded.¹⁶²

Both the Guomindang and the Communists used this lack of action by the Shanghai Municipal Council to whip up anti-foreign sentiment in China.¹⁶³ A general strike was called in the International Settlement where there were numerous attacks against the police and foreigners in June and July.¹⁶⁴ The strike eventually petered out by the end of September.¹⁶⁵ The situation was different in Canton and Hong Kong.

By 1925, military and political organisation and training in the Guomindang was well advanced. On 23 June 1925 more than 50 Chinese were killed and over a hundred wounded in what became known as the 'Shaji Massacre' where a demonstration was

162 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1925*, , Shanghai Municipal Council, 1926,p. 49. The final toll is in some doubt as there are conflicting official figures. The Foreign Office in a report dated 10 June 1925 notes seven killed and the figures from the British Legation in Peking in its annual report noted that 'four of the crowd were killed outright, seven eventually succumbed to their wounds and fourteen were wounded'. *Foreign Office FO 371/3028/10 China Annual Report (1925) dated 2 June 1926*, 'China annual report 1925 dated 2 June 1926,Peking, printed for the use of the Foreign Office marked Confidential, p. 11.

163 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1925*, p. 52.

164 . *Ibid.*, pp. 50 & 51.

165 . *Ibid.*, p. 49.

fired upon by British personnel troops guarding the Sha Mian Concession. Cantonese soldiers using a political demonstration commemorating the killing of five Frenchmen by a bomb thrown by an Annamite (a person from the northern Vietnam province of Annam) for cover, fired upon French, British and Portuguese troops guarding the Sha Mian Concession. One French civilian was killed with one British Marine, the Commissioner of Customs, and two civilians wounded. The French forces fired back first from machine guns mounted on the French gunboat, *Altair*, followed by British and Portuguese personnel.¹⁶⁶

This led to a 16-month boycott of trade with Hong Kong and a general strike in Hong Kong. When the striking workers from Hong Kong returned to Guangzhou, the Guomindang, including members of the Chinese Communist Party, used the experience they had gained in training the army to quickly organise and train the strikers as workers' pickets to enforce the boycott. A committee was formed to organise them into workers' picket 'brigades', with each nominally the size of an infantry battalion. Initially each brigade had a headquarters with a commander, a supervisor and a training officer. The supervisor was later replaced with a seven-man committee in light of the experience gained with the workers' pickets.¹⁶⁷ Each brigade had five 'big teams' (*dalu*), each with three detachments (*zhidui*), each of which had three groups of 12 men. Thus each brigade was structured as an infantry battalion of five companies each with three platoons of three squads for a nominal total of 540 men.¹⁶⁸ Each 'brigade' was armed with 400 rifles, with less than half being usable.¹⁶⁹ This organisation and training enabled the Communists in Zhabei to defeat the forces of the local warlord, Sun Chuanfang, in early 1927.

166. 'Unprovoked Attack on the Shameen by Canton Communists', *North China Herald*, Volume CLV, Number 3020, 27 June 1925, pp. 483 & 484.

167. Deng Zhongxia, *Zhongguo zhigong yundong jianshi (1921-1926)*, Beijing, 1956, p. 230.

168. *Ibid.*

169. *Ibid.*

In a report to the Foreign Office, dated 17 July 1925, the Governor of Hong Kong reported that large quantities of Russian arms were being imported into Canton and that 'Hong Kong strikers are being armed and drilled by Russians'.¹⁷⁰ The latter was incorrect as although there were Russian advisors, there was no evidence that they were training the strikers and, moreover, the Chinese were quite able to train them. The Governor of Hong Kong was most concerned about the strikers being armed and trained by the Guomintang as he reported to the Colonial Office that: 'It is not possible to ignore the possibility of Hong Kong being attacked.'¹⁷¹ Although Hong Kong proper was never attacked, incidents arose as a result of the trade blockade of Hong Kong. On 16 July 1925, a picket fired upon a boat on the Shamshun River within British territorial waters. Two women were killed and two others drowned as a result of this shooting and on 30 July 1925 a picket shot at a British Police patrol on the border with no casualties. There were also incursions into the New Territories.¹⁷² On 14 and 31 July 1925, 'small parties of armed Chinese Soldiers made raids across the frontier for the purpose of stealing pigs and cattle'.¹⁷³

The End of the United Front

The Guomintang took action in March 1926 to reduce the influence of the Communists in the Guomintang. Chiang Kai-shek, who had taken control of the Guomintang after the death of Sun Yat-sen, declared that leftist elements in the Guomintang were planning an armed overthrow. Troops loyal to Chiang arrested the leading Communists and their Comintern advisors in Guangdong. They were released after agreeing to register all Communists in the Guomintang, remove themselves from many of the

170 . *Foreign Office FO 371/10935 F35275/1925 dated 6 August 1925*, 'Suppression of the Malayan Branches of the Kuo Min Tang'.

171 . *Ibid.*

172 . *Foreign Office FO 371/10935*, 'Telegram from the Governor of Hong Kong to the Secretary of State for the Colonies' dated 1 August 1925.

173 . *Ibid.*

committee positions in the Guomindang and curb the power of its Comintern advisors.¹⁷⁴ These were the same advisors that Chiang had used to build his army. When the Soviet Embassy in Beijing was raided on 6 April 1927, documents revealing the extent of Communist subversion in the Guomindang and the Soviet Union's influence of the Chinese Communist Party were discovered and published.¹⁷⁵

The authorities in the International Settlement, through the Shanghai Municipal Police, were having successes as well. The Annual Departmental Report for 1926 noted that the Chinese Communist Party in the International Settlement was subdued in comparison to other provinces. The SMP banned all political demonstrations, handbill distribution and street lectures in 1926, and under these orders 125 people were prosecuted and six headquarters of 'agitators' closed down.¹⁷⁶ Over 400 different types of handbills were distributed,¹⁷⁷ but these figures really do not show the full extent of communism in Shanghai. The headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party was still in Shanghai and its strength grew rapidly in the first three months of 1927.

The height of the workers' pickets, which also sowed the seeds of its own downfall, was in the early months of 1927. The reaction to the workers' pickets, by the Guomindang and the treaty powers, showed the impossibility of the Marxist strategy of using urban insurrection to change the government in China. With the advance of the Northern Expedition towards Shanghai in early 1927 the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai started to mobilise its workers' pickets to take over Zhabei, the Chinese area of Shanghai. Chiang Kai-shek's advance also worried the authorities of the French and International Settlements who called for military assistance from the countries represented in the International Settlement. The British, Japanese and the Americans, amongst others, sent

174 . Spence & Chin, *op. cit.* p. 78.

175 . Wilbur, & How, *op. cit.*, pp. 606 & 607.

176 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1926*, Shanghai Municipal Council, 1927, p. 51.

177 . *Ibid.*

forces as none wanted to lose any of their concessions along the Chinese coast. This had already occurred in early January when Guomindang forces took over the inland British concessions of Hankou and Jiujiang.¹⁷⁸

There were clashes between the Guomindang's Northern Expedition and the forces of Sun Chuanfang, the local warlord, around Shanghai in February and March 1927 as they battled for control of the city. Taking advantage of this, the Chinese Communist Party, using its workers' pickets, sponsored a general strike from 20 - 24 February and an aborted uprising on 24 February in Zhabei.¹⁷⁹ Another Communist uprising on 21 March 1927 was more successful and 2,700 workers' pickets took control of Zhabei and obtained 1,700 rifles and a sizeable amount of machine guns.¹⁸⁰ With Zhabei under the control of the workers' pickets, the Northern Expedition attacked and took over the city of Shanghai in the afternoon of 22 March 1927.¹⁸¹ There were clashes between the forces protecting the International Settlement and units either of the Northern Expedition or the Communists. Two British armoured cars were attacked by two machine guns on the night of 21 March, firing from Zhabei.¹⁸² Six bodies, clothed in black, were found the next morning and in the unit diary they were believed to be part of the 'Cantonese Army' (Guomindang).¹⁸³ Later in the year, an article in the *Royal Tank Corps Journal* identified them as communists. The Guomindang was now seen as friendly towards the British; the communists became their shared foe.

178 . Martin, B.G. "The Pact with the Devil": The Relationship Between the Green Gang and the French Concession Authorities 1925-1935', *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 49, March 1989, p. 104.

179 . Cheng Tzu-ming. 'Evolution of the People's Liberation Army', *Issues & Studies*, December 1979, p. 74.

180 . *Xiangdao Zhoubao*, No. 194, 1 May 1927.

181 . Cheng, *op.cit.*, p. 72.

182 . 'The 5th Armoured Car Coy. in China', *The Royal Tank Corps Journal* 1927, 1928, p. 183.

183 . *Historical Record 5th Armoured Car Company Royal Tank Corps period 1/4/26 to 31/3/27 Appendix 11 dated 25 March 1927.*

There were two problems with the communists in nominal control of Shanghai. The municipal authorities in the French and International Settlements did not want the communists so close and Chiang Kai-shek did not want to share power with them. To destroy their power, and purge Shanghai of ‘undesirable elements’, the Guomindang with the assistance of the Green Gang secret society, and the tacit support of the French and International Concessions attacked the communists in the morning of 12 April 1927.¹⁸⁴ The Shanghai Municipal Police were not involved in this action except in allowing armed Green Gang members to pass through the Settlement quietly and unhindered.¹⁸⁵ The Communists lost 20 machine guns, 3,000 rifles, 200 Mauser pistols, one million rounds of ammunition, seven handcart loads of axes and 2,000 long handled pikes.¹⁸⁶

In the course of the year the ‘White Terror’ spread across the cities of China and destroyed the Communists’ city power bases forcing them to go underground, with city operations disrupted for the rest of the year and into much of the next. The Shanghai Municipal Police played its part in suppressing communism in the International Settlement, prosecuting 185 people for offences related to communism including rioting and the dissemination of literature, and having 14 headquarters of ‘the agitators’ closed down.¹⁸⁷ The ‘White Terror’ destroyed any chance there was of an urban-based Marxist revolution, but what it did do was create the spark of revolution, and instil the determination to overthrow the Guomindang. This occurred when some army units in Nanchang mutinied leading to what was to become the People’s Liberation Army.

This chapter has examined the arming of the Chinese Communist Party in its formative period of 1919-1927. It has been shown that the CCP, though small and nominally part of

184 . For instance the French Concession Authorities supplied the Green Gang with 300 rifles, 150 revolvers and 1,000 steel helmets. See Martin, B.G. “‘The Pact with the Devil’: The Relationship Between the Green Gang and the French Concession Authorities 1925-1935”, *Papers on Far Eastern History*, No. 49, March 1989, p. 105.

185 . *Ibid.*, p. 104 & 105.

186 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council 1927*, Shanghai Municipal Council, International Settlement of Shanghai, 1928, p. 53.

187 . *Ibid.*

the Guomindang, possessed an ‘armed wing’ that was able to take over a city. This action also proved to be its downfall, but it gave the leaders invaluable experience for the future. The next chapter examines the how the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army from the Nanchang Uprising, through a series of failed rural and urban uprisings, went onto form the Jiangxi Soviet. It was at this time that the PLA’s operational art took form.

CHAPTER TWO

ANNEI RANGWAI ¹⁸⁸

The defining period of the operational art of the PLA was 1927 - 1934. There are two major schools of thought on the operational art of the PLA. One regards Mao's vision of People's War as the PLA's operational art and is seen to have influenced the doctrine of the PLA until the disaster of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. The other, primarily championed by Whitson and Jencks, and argued and expanded upon in this thesis, is that the Red Army officers who studied at the Whampoa Academy and officers who studied at the Frunze Academy, derived the PLA's operational art from Soviet models.¹⁸⁹

The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and Soviet Operational Art

The first half of the 1920s was a fervent and vibrant period in Soviet military academies where new ideas on military operations and strategy were developed. Members of the Chinese Communist Party, and initially members of the Guomindang, were undergoing training at these academies. At the Whampoa Academy, the Soviet advisory team under Blyukher taught Frunze's 'unitary military doctrine', but this was now out of date with what was being taught about operational art to students in the Soviet Union. Jencks rightly pointed out this dichotomy, with the Whampoa cadets being taught what he called the 'unified strategy' while those in Moscow were taught 'integral strategy'. Jencks and Whitson confused 'unified strategy' with Frunze's 'unitary military doctrine', while 'integral strategy' was Soviet Operational Art.

188 . This translates as 'First subjugate the internal enemy, then expel the external enemy'. Wakeman Jr., F. *Policing Shanghai*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1995, p. 193.

189 . Jencks, H.W. *From Muskets to Missiles: Politics and Professionalism in the Chinese Army, 1945-1981*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1982, pp. 38 – 41.

Frunze's 'unified military strategy' decentralised control, intermixed Party, army and government, and so synthesised a unity of offensive action, ideological training and the 'promotion of world revolution'. This fitted in with the Lenin's views of communism, and the experiences of the various Bolshevik armies in the Russian Civil War, which had just concluded.¹⁹⁰ Frunze's unified military strategy resembles Mao's operational art as Active Defence in reinforcing spoiling and pre-emptive strikes, along with Mao's emphasis of 'man over machine' philosophy and the 'world revolution' which he espoused in the 1960s, at the height of People's War doctrine and the Cultural Revolution.

The unified military strategy had four general statements,¹⁹¹ all of which tie in with Mao's vision of People's War:

- a. there is a proletarian method of war – Mao's People's War;
- b. the method of war must reflect the society and means of production – the use of a peasant based revolution and the militarising of the villages as a means of both support of the Red Army and political control;
- c. manoeuvre, offensive and *aktivnost* (dynamism or activity) are essential in military operations; Mao's use of offensive flank attacks and the use of 'drawing an enemy in deep' to isolate and the destroy them piecemeal; and
- d. the Soviet military is a vehicle for spreading the revolution in the interests of the world proletariat – for Maoist China this is reflected in the takeover of Tibet, the Chinese support for the Viet Minh and then North Vietnam, and China's involvement with insurgency groups in the 1950s and 1960s.

190 . David M. Galntz, email correspondence to the author, 19 November 2007.

190. Glantz, D.M. *Soviet Military Operational Art: In Pursuit of Deep Battle*, Frank Cass, London, 1991, p. 65.

The later Soviet Operational Art emphasised central control, but more autonomy in political, military and government chains of command.¹⁹² Frunze's unified military strategy was used twice by the Chinese Communists: in the aftermaths of the Long March; and the Japanese response to the One Hundred Regiments Campaign. Both times the Red Army was at a distinct disadvantage in regards to the Guomindang and needed to build support and win over the local peasants.

Besides being heavily influenced (Whitson describes it as obsessed¹⁹³) by Frunze's unified military strategy, Mao also drew inspiration from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. Chinese military historians have shown that the theories and principles contained in this work greatly influenced Mao, who played a significant role in planning and executing the Huai Hai Campaign, and also his generals in the field.¹⁹⁴ Tan Yiqing, a researcher in China's Academy of Military Science's Department of Strategic Studies, has written the following about the way in which Sun Tzu's ideas helped shape Mao's military thinking:

The primary source of Mao Zedong's military thought was the practical experience of the Chinese revolutionary war . . . [but he] also drew upon China's splendid ancient military heritage, most notably the essence of Sunzi's [Sun Tzu's] *The Art of War*. If one does not understand what Mao Zedong's military thought inherited from *The Art of War*, it will be impossible to understand its deep grounding in history, and it will also be very hard to explain the unique Chinese characteristics inherent in Mao's strategy and tactics.¹⁹⁵

192 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p.38.

193 . Whitson, *op. cit.*, p. 473

194 . Tan Yuqing. 'Mao Zedong junshi sixiang yu Sunzi bingfa', *Junshi Lishi*, 1999 Niandi, 1 Qi, p. 17.

195 . *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Further:

Mao Zedong not only put Sunzi's theories about war into practice, he used the fine quintessence of Sunzi's thought to create strategic theories that fit the specific conditions of China's revolutionary war, pushing Sunzi into a new age.¹⁹⁶

While the operational art is simply expressed as the art of winning wars, it is the application of analysis and insight, not only force. Simpkin wrote that operational art is manoeuvre warfare inside a theatre, as opposed to attrition warfare.¹⁹⁷ Soviet staff officers, utilising their experiences during the 1919-1920 Civil War, first espoused the operational level of war in the early 1920s. The nascent Red Army¹⁹⁸ was involved in fighting on many fronts, and both strategy and tactics did not cover this type of conflict. The concept of the operational art was advanced by Alecsandr A. Svechin, who in 1926 was a member of the Frunze Academy and the Red Army Staff Academy. The concept was developed further by a number of theorists in the 1930s and received its full definition in the Red Army's *Polvei Ustav* (Field Regulations) of 1936.¹⁹⁹ Using the idea of successive operations, Svechin explained operational art thus:

. . . tactical creativity is governed by operational art. Combat operations are not self contained, they are only the basic material from which an operation is formed. Only in very infrequent cases can one rely on achieving the ultimate goal of

196 . *Ibid.*, p. 19.

197 . Simpkin, R.E. *Race to the Swift: Thoughts on Twenty-First Century Warfare*, Brassey's, London, 1985, pp 23 & 24.

198 . Its correct title is the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA), but I am using the term 'Red Army' here to differentiate it from the Chinese Communist Party's Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

199 . David M. Galntz, email correspondence to the author, 18 November 2007

combat operations in a single battle. Normally this path is broken into a series of operations separated by more or less lengthy pauses, which take place in different areas in a theatre and differ significantly from one another due to the differences between the immediate goals one's forces strive for.²⁰⁰

He further wrote:

An operation is a conglomerate of quite different actions: namely, drawing up the plan of the operation; logistical preparations; concentrating one's forces at the starting position; building defensive fortifications; marching; fighting battles which lead to the encirclement or destruction of a portion of the hostile forces and the forced withdrawal of other hostile forces, either as a result of a direct envelopment or as a result of a preliminary breakthrough, and to the capture or holding of a certain line or geographical area. Tactics and administration are the material and the success of the development of an operation depends on both the successful solution of individual tactical problems by the forces and the provision of all the material they need to conduct an operation without interruption until the ultimate goal is achieved. On the basis of the goal of an operation, operational art sets forth a whole series of tactical missions and a number of logistical requirements. Operational art also dictates the basic line of conduct of an operation, depending on the material available, the time which may be deployed for battle on a certain front, and finally on the nature of the operation itself. We cannot acknowledge the full superiority of objective battlefield conditions over our will. Combat operations are only one aspect of the greater whole represented by an operation, and the nature of the planned operation.²⁰¹

200 . Svechin, A.A. *Strategy*, East View Publications, Minneapolis, 1992, p. 68. This is a translation of his 1927 work, *Strategiia*, printed in Moscow by Voennyi vestnik.

201 . *Ibid.*, p. 69.

In the immediate post-civil war period, Soviet Russian military academicians, staff and commanders set up associations to study military science, under the guidance of the Communist Party. One area that was of particular concern to the Military Studies Society of the Red Army was how to articulate as doctrine forms of combat action as well as the restructuring of the armed forces to match these changes in military thought. Two leaders of this school of thought were S.S. Kamanev, the commander of the Red Army from 1919-1924 and M.N. Tukhachevsky.²⁰² Kamanev wrote:

In spite of all victorious fights before the battle, the fate of the campaign will be decided in the very last battle – Interim defeats in a campaign, however serious they may be, subsequently will be viewed as ‘individual episodes’ – In the warfare of modern large armies, defeat of the enemy results from the sum of continuous and planned victories on all fronts, . . . the uninterrupted conduct of operations is the main condition of victory.²⁰³

In 1926 Tukhachevsky added:

Modern tactics are characterised primarily by organisation of battle, presuming coordination of various branches of troops. Modern strategy embraces its former meaning: that is the ‘tactics of a theatre of military operations.’ However this definition is complicated by the fact that strategy prepares for battle, but it also participates in and influences the course of battle. Modern operations involve the concentration of forces necessary to strike a blow, and the infliction of continual and uninterrupted blows of these forces against the enemy throughout an extremely deep area. The nature of modern weapons and the modern battle is

202 . Glantz, *op. cit.* pp. 20 & 21.

203 . Kamanev, S.S. ‘Ocherednye voennye zadachi’, (Successive military objectives), in *Voprosy strategii i operativnogo iskusstva v sovetskikh voennykh trudakh (1917-1940)*, Voenizdat, Moskva, 1965, pp. 149 – 152, cited in Glantz, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

such that it is impossible to destroy the enemy's manpower by one blow in a one day battle. Battle in a modern operation stretches out into a series of battles not only along the front but also in depth until that time when the enemy has been struck by a final annihilating blow or when the offensive forces are exhausted. In that regard, modern tactics of a theatre of military operations are tremendously more complex by the inescapable condition mentioned above that the strategic commander cannot personally organise combat.²⁰⁴

Students were taught this refinement of operational art in the Soviet Union's military academies, as were the Chinese students studying in them. The education of Chinese students at these academies was aimed at training officers capable of commanding 'large-scale military units in China', that is, at the operational level of war.²⁰⁵

The Communist University of the Toilers of the East (KUTV) was founded in 1921 with the aim of training cadres to make them 'real revolutionaries armed with the theory of Leninism, equipped with practical experience of Leninism, and capable of carrying out the immediate tasks of the liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries with all their heart and soul'.²⁰⁶ From September 1927 to June 1928, the KUTV also ran special military-political courses.²⁰⁷ These courses were run at an elementary level and the content was deemed as trivial, largely because many of the Chinese students were combat experienced, and the head of the military school was seen as arrogant and ignorant of China.²⁰⁸

204 . Tukhachevsky, M.N. 'Voina' (War), 1926, in *Voprosy strategii i operativnogo iskusstva v sovetskikh voennykh trudakh (1917-1940)*, Voenizdat, Moskva, 1965, pp. 104-105, cited in Glantz, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

205 . Pantsov, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

206 . Stalin, J.V. 'The Political Tasks of the University of the Peoples of the East', in *Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, p. 153.

207 . Pantsov, *loc. cit.*

208 . Wang Fan-hsi. *Chinese Revolutionary*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1980, p. 62.

At the KUTV, Chinese students from 1921 until the late 1930s worked alongside other nationalities in advancing Communism except for the period 1925 – 1930. In this period they were taught at an institution in the Soviet Union initially known as the Sun Yat-sen University of the Toilers of China (UTK), but on 17 September 1928 it was renamed as the Communist University of the Toilers of China (KUTK) after Stalin finally realised the United Front had failed.²⁰⁹ Special Chinese student departments were set up in the Frunze Military Academy, the Tolmachev Military Political Academy, the Aeronautical Military-theoretical School, the Artillery School, the Moscow Infantry School and in military schools in Kiev and other provincial centres. Military training was also given to Chinese Communists when they visited Moscow. In early 1928 some of the veterans of the Nanchang and Autumn Harvest Uprisings arrived at the Sun Yat-sen University, which included a large number of workers, trade unionists, and youth and women's activists.²¹⁰ Alexander Pantsov, using the archives of the KUTV and the UTK/KUTK identified 500 Chinese students as attending the KUTV and 1,600 attending the UTK/KUTV. From various sources he discovered that of the 118 top leaders of the Chinese Communist Party who studied abroad, 80 (70 percent) studied in the Soviet Union. Forty-seven of these became members of the Central Committee and 15 became Politburo members.²¹¹

Two Chinese Communist Party military commanders that were trained in Soviet higher military academies were Liu Bocheng and Nie Rongzhen. Both were awarded the rank of Marshal of the PLA in September 1955. Upon their return from the Soviet Union, they were able to teach and influence the operational level of warfare first in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and then the People's Liberation Army.

209 . Pantsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 164 & 165.

210 . *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

211 . *Ibid.*

Liu Bocheng went to the Soviet Union in 1928 and studied at the Frunze Academy. Upon his return in 1930, he commenced to work in the Central Military Commission (CMC). At the end of 1931 he took charge of the Red Army Academy and in October 1932 became chief of staff of the CMC. After a distinguished combat career where he was noted for his use of manoeuvre warfare during the Civil War, he served as the president of the PLA Military Academy in the period 1951 to 1957. In November 1954 he concurrently became the director of the PLA General Training Department until 1957, but remained as a member of the Standing Committee of the Military Affairs Commission.²¹²

Nie Rongzhen became a student activist in Paris in 1919 and joined the CCP in 1922. In 1924 and 1925 he went to the Soviet Union and attended the KUTV and the Soviet Military Academy to study military affairs and the defence industry. Upon his return he became the secretary and instructor at the Huangpo (Whampoa) Military Academy's Political Department under Zhou Enlai. At the Nanchang Rebellion he was the CCP representative to the Eleventh Army. His organisation skills saw him become a deputy director of the Political Department of the Chinese Red Army Command in the late 1920s and deputy chief of staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army in 1931-1935. In combination with Lin Biao's forces during the Civil War, he oversaw the surrender of Beijing and Tianjin after Guomindang forces were caught in a pincer movement. From 1945 Nie was a Central Committee member and a Politburo member from 1956-69 and 1977-1987, after his fall from grace during the Cultural Revolution.²¹³

212 . Footnote One to 'Order No. 30 of the Central Council of People's Commissars', dated 13 October 1932 in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 302; Klein, D.W. & Clark, A.B. *Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism 1921-1965 Volumes I and II*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1971.pp, 614 & 615.

213 . Xiaobing Li, Millett, Allan R. & Bin Yu. *Mao's Generals Remember Korea*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2001, p. 38; Pantsov, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

Annei Rangwei was the term for Chiang Kai-shek's policy of destroying the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) before attacking and defeating the Japanese in China. It was an amalgam of the term *Annei* (subjugate the internal enemy, the Communists) before *Rangwei* (expelling the external enemy, the Japanese).²¹⁴ In 1927 the White Terror had destroyed Communist Party's influence in the Guomindang and disrupted its organisation in the cities of China, forcing it to go underground. Further attacks, aimed at the destruction of the CCP and its various organs, became the state policy. This came at the expense of defeating the Japanese military forces in China, and removing the extraterritoriality rights enjoyed by foreign powers in the treaty ports. The CCP's realisation that a workers' led revolution was not possible without a military force, saw Guomindang troops under Zhu De mutiny at Nanchang on 1 August 1927. This act was the beginning of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army that eventually became the People's Liberation Army which saw the Communists take power in 1949.

At the 7 August emergency meeting of the CCP, the then Party secretary Chen Duxiu was denounced as a 'rightist opportunist', and a policy of revolution against the Guomindang 'White Terror' was adopted. This meant plans to occupy major industrial cities where the workers would rise up and then turn them into 'soviet' cities.²¹⁵ Unfortunately for the Communists, the uprising of the workers and peasants did not occur and led to the situation in late February and early March 1928 at Haifeng and Lufeng where 'many of the best revolutionary cadres were sacrificed'.²¹⁶ All the various forces eventually retreated to the Jinggangshan (Jinggang Mountains) by April 1928 where Mao Zedong had formed *the first soviet base area*.

214 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

215 Klein & Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 993.

216 . *Ibid.*, p. 349.

From Defeat to Defeat: Chinese Communist Armed Forces from August 1927 to March 1928

The Nanchang uprising was formulated by Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, Ye Ting and He Long. Some of the other officers involved were Lin Biao, Nie Rongzhen, Chen Yi, and Liu Bocheng. This group were the fathers of the People's Liberation Army and all but Zhou Enlai and Ye Ting were awarded the title of Marshal of the People's Republic of China in September 1955.²¹⁷ Zhou Enlai was a civilian so was not eligible and Ye Ting was killed in an aircraft accident in 1946.²¹⁸ It was not an auspicious beginning.

The Communist forces were driven from Nanchang on 4-5 August 1927 with few casualties. Around 20,000 strong, it was split into He Long's 20th Army which had three divisions; Ye Ting's 11th Army which had three regiments, and Zhu De's Ninth Army which was only one regiment. Almost immediately one of Ye Ting's divisions, the 10th, defected back to the Guomindang. During the next three weeks, the forces moved south through Jiangxi and Fujian provinces before capturing Shantou on 23 September 1927.²¹⁹

In the initial forced three-day march from Nanchang to Linchuan, military discipline broke down. The 20th Army was notorious for its ill-discipline. Soldiers shot peasants and pressed them as porters under the barrel of a gun; and their staff officers, along with those from the 11th Division, deserted during their break in Linchuan. He Long's 20th Army had five regiments of experienced soldiers and a sixth regiment of raw recruits. The four battalion-strong training regiment was also of raw recruits and two battalions were recruited from reserves. After three days the losses were severe with the Sixth

217 . Gittings, J. *The Role of the Chinese Army*, Oxford University Press, London, 1967, p. 155. For individual biographical details of Chinese Communist Party officials up to 1965 see Klein and Clark, *loc. cit.*

218 . 'Records of Comrade Deng Xiaoping's Shenzhen Tour, *People's Daily On-line*, 25 January 2002, accessed 19 November 2007.

219 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 1013.

Regiment down to half its original strength.²²⁰ The force carried all its equipment as it had no porters. The peasants refused to help, having been told that the force was going to introduce communal wives and farms. There was no food or water and they took to drinking from ditches, contracting water borne diseases and dying on the march. After three days, losses approached 4,000 - mostly from desertion or having died from illness, and all the mortars and half the ammunition had been abandoned.²²¹

After stopping the troops at Linchuan for three days the force rested and was given propaganda by cadres and a Party organisation established within the force. The force then continued towards Ruijin in cooler weather, but the peasants were even more hostile, soldiers who dropped out of the march frequently being killed by them. Their fighting spirit had been restored, however, as they took the city of Ruijin by defeating two Guomindang armies but suffered over 1,400 casualties.²²²

Having rested for a week, they headed towards Swatow and Chaozhou unmolested and took Swatow and Chaozhou with the force numbering around 5,000 on 24 September. Five GMD divisions numbering 15,000 well-rested soldiers attacked the force and after three days of heavy fighting Chaozhou fell and Swatow was then abandoned.²²³ After this defeat the force numbered around 2,000 due to desertions and battle deaths. Ye Ting's army, now down to 700 men, escaped to the countryside and his forces merged with He Long's and withdrew to the area around Haifeng and Lufeng where Peng Pai had organised a small Communist soviet.²²⁴ Zhou Shidi's 25th Division fought a rear guard

220 . Li Lisan 'The Experiences and Lessons of the August 1st Revolution', *Central Newsletter*, No. 7, 30 October 1927, pp. 24 - 42, cited in Wilbur, C.M. 'The Ashes of Defeat, *China Quarterly*, Number 18, April-June 1964, pp. 12 & 13.

221 . See also Zhou Yiqun, 'Zhou Yiqun's Report', *Central Newsletter*, No. 7, 30 October 1927, pp. 48 - 51, cited in Wilbur, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 & 28.

222 . *Ibid.*, Li Lisan, *loc. cit.*

223 . Li Lisan, *op. cit.*, p. 14, Zhou Yiqun, *loc. cit.*, pp. 29 & 30.

224 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

action north of Swatow and then joined up with Zhu De's soldiers who were also fighting as a rear guard force; they retreated together to Fujian Province.²²⁵

With the forces of He Long and Ye Ting out of contact with the Central Committee plans for an autumn harvest uprising were updated and put into action. The original concept was for an insurrection in the four provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi and Guangdong, but after the forces of He Long and Ye Ting became unavailable the plan now centred on capturing the major cities in the central Yangtze valley in Hunan and Hubei provinces. The plan essentially relied on the peasant masses to rise up, supporting any armed military units, and not the other way around. The Communist forces were based on peasant associations, peasant self-defence forces and Communist Party cells in the cities. These were to be supplemented by 'Red Spear' (secret society) and bandit groups if these could be brought over to help. This was not always possible as, for example, the Hubei Provincial Committee which had no concept of the military situation in the field, refused the local Communist cadres from seeking assistance outside the peasant associations, including Communist military advisors, branding the Communist actions as 'opportunistic' or 'military adventurism'.²²⁶ The insurrection was doomed from the start.

Guomindang suppression of the peasant associations in East Hubei after the Day of the Horse Incident made any uprising there impossible. In South Hubei the Special Committee there realised that an attack on a major city could only lead to disaster. Leaders of the Communist peasant movement restricted the armed activities to self-defence only and had sought to prevent them from being armed. In the whole of South Hubei there were less than 300 firearms scattered unevenly throughout the counties. There was no 'Red Spear' organisation, so effectively there was no firm base, nor local

225 . *Ibid.*

226 . *Hubei Nongmin Baodong Jingguo zhi Baogao* (Report on the Events of the Hubei Peasant Insurrection) cited in Hofheinz Jr, R. 'The Autumn Harvest Uprising', *China Quarterly*, No. 32, Oct-Dec 1967, pp. 37 – 87.

armed unit, to assist the peasants. After a robbery on the Changsha train on 8 September 1927, alerting the Guomindang of the insurrection a day before it was supposed to happen, this small group based around the Special Committee then decided to attack Hsienning with the assistance of 800 local peasant troops under its commander Liu Pui. They abandoned their attack on 9 September and then moved to the hills to establish the Xigeng Revolutionary Government on 12 September, predating Mao's move to the Jinggangshan by a week. In any event they tried to organise one more attack on Xintien and asked for assistance a local commander with Communist sympathies, Liu Pui, who but ambushed them as he was slighted by not having enough share of the loot from the train robbery. The members of the Special Committee filtered back to Hankou where they were ordered back to South Hubei by the Hubei Provincial Committee to 'carry on the insurrection'.²²⁷ The Special Committee broke up and was eventually captured by the Guomindang and executed or disappeared from view. This effectively finished the Autumn Harvest Uprising, although there were uprisings until early November as the Provincial Committee kept calling for more insurrections despite their failures, each time blaming the local cadres.

227 . *Ibid.*

Mention needs to be made of Peng Pai who had created a peasant revolutionary army in the area around Haifeng and Lufeng. He organised an uprising on 1 May 1927 that was defeated eight days later but his forces established themselves in the countryside.²²⁸ Following the Central Committee's direction to stage the Autumn Harvest Uprising, Peng Pai's forces retook Haifeng but were again forced to retreat to the countryside in late August in the face of Guomindang attacks. Peng Pai sent out patrols to make contact and gather what was left of He Long's and Ye Ting's forces which eventually numbered around 800. These combined forces were now designated the Second Division of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.²²⁹

On 1 November 1927, due to a Guomindang power struggle between generals Li Jishen and Chang Kui in Guangzhou, all of the Guomindang forces were withdrawn from the Haifeng area and the Second Division quickly moved in and established control in Haifeng and several other towns, including Lufeng. On 21 November, a public conference of workers, peasants and soldiers establish a soviet government, China's first soviet political power.²³⁰

The CCP had set up a committee to organise an uprising in Guangzhou that became known in the West as the Canton Commune, which was the watershed for the Agrarian revolution. Canton, now called Guangzhou, was where the workers on strike from Hong Kong had created the first workers' army in China and was the one city where the workers would have been expected to rise up in support of the Chinese Communist Party. This was an abject failure. Due to an internal Guomindang struggle for power the Guangdong CCP Provincial Committee resolved on 26 November to ferment an uprising. A revolutionary committee under Zhang Tailei was set up, with assistance from the

228 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 722.

229 . *Ibid.*, pp. 722 & 723.

230 . *Ibid.*, p. 723.

Soviet consulate, and decided upon 13 December for the uprising, but it was brought forward to 11 December 1927 due to the date being leaked.²³¹ Zhang Tailei, in conjunction with Ye Ting and Xu Xiangqian with other senior Chinese Communist Party members, led the armed uprising and set up a soviet government.²³² Unfortunately for the Communists, the ‘masses’ did not join them, as Ye Ting wrote ‘help us by destroying the (rail) tracks’. Zhang Tailei was killed in fighting on 12 December 1927, and the commune was destroyed the following day by Guomindang forces under Zhang Fukui; several thousand workers and peasants were killed.²³³ The Soviet consulate was closed down with the Guomindang breaking off diplomatic relations with the USSR and ordering all Soviet diplomats and citizens in China to leave. Of the survivors, 1,200 made their way to the Haifeng Soviet and became the Fourth Division; Ye Ting went to study overseas.²³⁴

The Second and Fourth Divisions comprised the core of the military units defending the Haifeng Soviet and numbered 2,800 by late February 1928.²³⁵ There were also Red Guards in the villages for self-defence and the Revolutionary Corps of Workers and Peasants – an armed peasant organisation numbering 1,000.²³⁶ Despite winning a battle in January the Soviet could not hold out. This was also despite the mobilisation of the Red Guards in the attack on 28 February when a Guomindang force under General Yu Han-mou destroyed both divisions in a classic pincer movement. The remnants slipped into the countryside, later to become guerrillas. There was a fruitless counterattack against the Guomindang forces in Haifeng on 6 March and then again on 3 May which decimated any remaining Communist forces. The Second Division was reduced to 240 men. Xingqian later wrote there were only 60 survivors from his Fourth Division and

231 . *Ibid.*, p. 52.

232 . *Ibid.*, pp. 51 & 52.

233 . *Ibid.*, p. 1014.

234 . *Ibid.*, p. 349.

235 . Eto, S. ‘Hai-lu-feng_ The First Chinese Soviet Government (Part II)’, *China Quarterly*, Number 9, January-March 1962, pp. 173.

236 . *Ibid.*, pp. 173 & 174.

that ‘our best revolutionary cadres were sacrificed’.²³⁷ This was not entirely correct as in early 1928 some of the veterans of the Nanchang and Autumn Harvest Uprisings had gone to the Soviet Union to study.²³⁸ The CCP was not equipped organisationally or militarily to enable a rural insurrection. The peasants – ‘the masses’ - in a base area needed to become ‘aroused’ politically which meant that they needed to be given political and some military training to enable the revolution to succeed. But what of Mao’s forces?

The Red Army under Mao took Liuyang in Hunan on 15 September 1927 but on 19 September was seriously defeated on the Jiangxi-Hunan Border.²³⁹ Mao then moved his ill equipped and depleted force to the Jinggangshan on the border area of Hunan and Jiangxi to build a revolutionary base area from where they could recover, rebuild and create a revolutionary army. Here they joined forces with two bandit leaders, Wang Zuo and Yuan Wencai, on 24 October 1927.²⁴⁰

By the beginning of October 1927 the Communist forces had been split into three main groups, the remnants of He’s and Ye’s forces with Pai Peng’s in Haifeng area, Zhu De’s force in the Fujian area and Mao’s in the Jinggangshan. Mao and Zhu De were in regular contact from December 1927.²⁴¹ In a bold move Mao moved his forces out of the Jinggangshan and on 18 November 1927 his troops seized Chaling in Hunan and held it for over 40 days before returning to the Jinggangshan.²⁴² The importance of Mao’s base area cannot be over emphasised when in late April 1928 Zhu De’s forces arrived there.

237 . *Ibid.*, pp. 178 & 179; Klein and Clark, *loc. cit.*

238 . Pantsov, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

239 . Mackerras, C. & Chan, R. *Modern China: A Chronology from 1842 to the Present*, W.H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, 1982, p. 316.

240 . ‘The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1927-1930’ in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.* , p. xxv.

241 . *Ibid.*

242 . Mackerras & Chan, *loc. cit.*

As Zhu De's and Zhou Shidi's force retreated to Fujian in October 1927, and then through Jiangxi, they were wracked with a power struggle between the two leaders, which resulted in them splitting. Further desertions saw the force down to 600 - 700 poorly armed men but Zhu De, using the pretext it was still a Guomindang unit, managed to get supplies from the Guomindang general of the 19th Army, Fan Shisheng.²⁴³ Following a directive from the CCP Central Committee forbidding CCP units forming temporary alliances with GMD units, Zhu's force split with Fan's and headed towards Yizhang, aided by two outstanding junior officers that were to make their mark on the PLA, Chen Yi and Peng Dehuai. Around 20 April 1928 after being involved in another failed uprising in South Hunan, Zhu De met up with Mao in Lingxian, and decided to join him in the Jinggangshan where his forces could rest and rebuild.²⁴⁴

The Jinggangshan could not support that many troops so in mid-July 1927, on the orders of the Central Committee the bulk of Mao's and Zhu De's forces sent an expedition to South Hunan to attack Chenzhou. Many of Zhu De's forces, notably the 29th regiment, were from Hunan Province, and forced the expedition against Mao's and Zhu's wishes.²⁴⁵ There was no clear operational plan and the Red Army lurched from one assault against cities to another in Southern Hunan and repeated counterattacks by Guomindang forces. The Hunan Provincial and Central Committees' hopes that the masses would be aroused failed to occur. The Jinggangshan would have fallen but for the battalion left to guard fighting a major battle. Mao wrote that if the attacks in Hunan had not occurred the area under control of the independent regime in the Jinggangshan would have expanded by mobilising the masses. The reasons that the expedition failed were laid solely at the Hunan Provincial Committee. It had removed itself from its support

243 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

244 . 'The Writings of Mao Zedong', 1927-1930 in Schram, *loc. cit.*, p. xxvii.

245 . Mao Zedong, 'Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee to the Central Committee (November 1928)' in Schram, *op. cit.*, pp. 85 & 86.

base, there was no intelligence on enemy forces, the plan lacked direction, the troops were tired from constant marching and morale was low.²⁴⁶

The Guomindang forces then blockaded the Red Army in the Jinggangshan. It was a military disaster with the Red Army losing half its strength and many areas under its control lost.²⁴⁷ They returned to the Jinggangshan on 26 September 1928 and started removing from the Party and army unreliable members who had been recruited during the rapid build-up of the Red Army in 1928.

The Central Committee had no idea of the problems that the Fourth Army had faced. In the period April to July 1928 the Fourth Army was attacked by units containing nine regiments, and on occasion 18 regiments, and survived despite it being only four regiments strong.²⁴⁸ The Red Guard units that had been formed at village level, the mountainous area the Red Army was in, and the inability of the Guomindang forces from Jiangxi and Hunan to coordinate their attacks, were deciding factors. Command and control problems in Guomindang attacks were to continue for five more years but once fixed, constituted a significant problem for the Red Army.

Rebuilding for the Struggle: From the Jinggangshan to the Li Lisan Line

Peng Dehuai led his forces, who had mutinied against the Guomindang, to the Jinggangshan in January 1929 having joined up with the Fourth Red Army on 10 December 1928. Peng's forces became the Fifth Red Army under his command. On 4

246 . *Ibid.*, pp. 86 – 89.

247 . *Ibid.*, pp. 116 & 117.

248 . Mao Zedong. Draft Resolution of the Second Congress of Xian Party Organisations in the Hunan-Jiangxi Border area' in Schram, *op. cit.*, pp. 67 & 68.

January 1929 Mao and Zhu De decided to establish a new base in southwest Jiangxi, the Jinggangshan being under blockade and constant attack, rendering it unviable for further expansion of the Red Army. Mao and Zhu De left the Jinggangshan with their forces on 14 January 1929, leaving Peng Dehuai with his two regiments as a rear guard. After repeated attacks from Guomindang forces, Peng Dehuai's forces moved out of the Jinggangshan on 29 January 1929 to join the Fourth Red Army.²⁴⁹

The Fourth Red Army initially moved to the border junction of Fujian, Guangdong and Jiangxi provinces, then to Jiangxi followed by Guomindang forces and decided to adopt a policy of flexible guerrilla warfare as opposed to creating fixed bases in the interim. Then they moved to southern Jiangxi and Fujian provinces and went over to winning the masses as they had defeated the local warlords by April 1929.²⁵⁰ On 1 April 1929 Peng Dehuai's force had joined the Fourth Red Army which now totalled 3,600 men and 1,100 rifles.²⁵¹ Basing themselves in Ruijin they went on an expedition in five *xian* (counties) attacking Guomindang elements and landlords and arousing the masses before returning to Ruijin in mid-April.

In March and April 1929, the Fourth Red Army was reorganised for guerrilla warfare. The first, second and third columns had over 1,200 men and about 500 small arms. Each column had two detachments, each equivalent of a small battalion, and each detachment had three groups (*da dui*) equivalent to companies. The columns were dispersed into villages and formed as required. Peng Dehuai's Fifth Red Army of 800 men and 500 small arms became the fifth column. A group of 500 men and 300 small arms under Tian Guiqing that had defected from the Guomindang became the fourth column and a group

249 . Mao Zedong. 'Report of Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, to the Central Committee (sent on 1 June 1929 from Hulshei, Yongding, in Fujian)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, p.168.

250 . Mao Zedong. 'A letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee (Ruijin 5 April 1929)' in Schram, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

251 . *Ibid.*, p. 159.

of 300 bandits with 200 small arms became an independent battalion under its leader Hu Zhusheng. These were trained from mid-April. There were also two regiments of the Jiangxi Red Army to assist the Fourth Red Army as required.²⁵² Mao told the Central Committee that the Fourth Red Army should be independent of local and front committees and only answerable to the Central Committee, with which it had trouble communicating - so the Red Army often acted independently of the Central Committee.²⁵³

Peng's forces moved out west to organise base areas on 14 April and the Red Army moved to southern Jiangxi to work on organising the mass movement.²⁵⁴ The Fourth Red Army settled down for the rest of the year mobilising the peasants to build the structure required for a mass Communist movement of Red Guards and the Party organisation in the countryside to create secure base areas.²⁵⁵ It also allowed for rebuilding the organisation; meanwhile the Guomindang was involved in suppressing rebellious warlords, leaving the Fourth Red Army much of the time alone.²⁵⁶ By January 1930 the Fourth Red Army had established effective base areas in southern Jiangxi, and to a lesser extent in northern and western Jiangxi with a smaller force working with the masses in Fujian.²⁵⁷ The Fourth Army's plan was to expand the base areas in Jiangxi as part of its operational plan but the Central Committee had other ideas.²⁵⁸

252 . *Ibid.*

253 . *Ibid.*, pp. 160 & 161.

254 . 'Report of Mao Zedong, Secretary of the Front Committee of the Fourth Red Army, to the Central Committee (sent on 1 June 1929 from Hulshei, Yongding, in Fujian)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

255 . Mao Zedong. 'Letter to Comrade Lin Biao (5 January 1930)', in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

256 . *Ibid.*, p. 245.

257 . *Ibid.*, pp. 244 & 245.

258 . *Ibid.*, p. 245

The Battles Within the Cities: The White Terror and the Export of Ideology into Southeast Asia

After the 'White Terror' spread the Communists fought back when they could. CCP propaganda now was against the Guomindang as well as the foreigners in their concessions. The CCP also increased its attacks on 'counter-revolutionary' elements, especially in Shanghai. The Central Committee still operated out of Shanghai where it was under constant attack. Zhou Enlai created the Red Brigade to protect the Central Committee, to enforce Party discipline and attack the Guomindang.²⁵⁹ The attacks on counter-revolutionary elements and the purging of unwanted elements of the Party led to increasing attacks against the Communist Party by the Shanghai Municipal Police. One group that came to the attention of the SMP, the Pootoo Road Assassination Gang, was responsible for 17 murders in the International Settlement from 25 August 1926 to 27 March 1928.²⁶⁰ The Shanghai Municipal Police broke the gang up in March and April 1928 making 22 arrests.²⁶¹ Thirteen members of the gang were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment; seven were handed over to the Guomindang on charges of communism and two acquitted.²⁶² A total of 76 Communists were handed over to the Guomindang by the SMP in 1928; many were executed.

Raids by the security forces in Singapore on 30 January 1928 and on 8 March 1928 showed that members of the Chinese Communist Party had fled to Singapore, to escape the White Terror.²⁶³ These CCP members, along with the remnants of the 'Main School'

259 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, pp. 139 - 142. The information was taken from the document, Concession Francaise de Changhai, Direction des Services de Police, Service Politique. Document No. 237/S. *Etude-Le mouvement communiste en Chine, 1920-1933*, Shangahi, 15 December 1933. The document was held by the Center for Chinese Studies, but was taken from the library there.

260 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council 1928*, Shanghai Municipal Council, International Settlement of Shanghai, 1929, p. 51.

261 . *Ibid.*

262 . *Ibid.*, p. 51.

263 . *Ibid.*

that had not been caught after the Kreta Ayer Incident, formed the Nanyang (South Seas) Provisional Commission of the Communist Party of China in January 1928. More commonly called the Nanyang Communist Party it targeted the colonies of Great Britain, France and Holland as well as Siam. The Chinese Communist Party now directed Communist operations in Southeast Asia in lieu of the Comintern.²⁶⁴ Far more radical than earlier Communist groups, its stated objectives included the use of assassination, the overthrow of the Straits Settlements government by force, and the use of Chinese labour as a means to create an organised labour struggle. Comrades were advised to acquire bombs, revolvers and daggers to suppress and kill the anti-revolutionaries.²⁶⁵ This radical posture resulted in an assassination attempt against a visiting group of Guomindang politicians in Singapore, and a series of bombings during the shoemakers' guild strike (discussed below) there afterwards.

On 8 February 1928, after Wu Chian Choo, a Guomindang politician from China had held a meeting at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Singapore, Cheong Yok Kai, a CCP member from Guangzhou along with two helpers attempted to kill him with a revolver that had been stolen from a planter's bungalow in Johore.²⁶⁶ He succeeded only in wounding Lim Boon Keng, a prominent local Straits-born Chinese. During his trial, Cheong Yok Kai admitted to having been sent by the Communist Party of China to kill Wu and two of his companions. To make their escape, Cheong's two assistants who were never identified, threw two bombs made from thermos flasks.²⁶⁷ Thermos bombs were the weapon of choice during the shoemakers' guild strike of 1928.

264 . *MBPI*, No. 58 dated 1 April 1928.

265 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council 1928*, *loc cit.*

266 . *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1928*, p. 877; *MBPI*, No. 57 dated 1 March 1928.

267 . *Straits Times*, 23 February 1928, pp. 9 & 10.

The shoemakers' guild in Singapore declared a strike on 15 February 1928 with its aim being a 40 percent pay rise. To enforce the strike, a bombing campaign was launched by the Nanyang Provisional Commission against shoemakers' shops that operated in defiance of the strike.²⁶⁸ The bombing campaign reached its height on 28 March when 11 bombs exploded simultaneously throughout Chinatown. The targets including a Hailam night school and the residence of a Hailam book seller who had recently been arrested for selling seditious material.²⁶⁹ One bomb-making factory was discovered on 6 March in Short Road when a bomb exploded during its manufacture with the police also seizing seditious material.²⁷⁰ A second bomb-making factory was raided on 8 March at 59B Balistier Road resulting in the arrest of several key members of the Nanyang Provisional Committee.²⁷¹ The shoemakers' strike lasted seven weeks, ceasing in late March after the Singapore police persuaded potential strike breakers to work under police protection.²⁷²

As a result of police action over the bombings against the Nanyang Provisional Commission of the Communist Party of China, Communist operations in Singapore for the rest of 1928 and 1929 were quiet. A raid on 23 December 1928 saw the important seizure of 25 pistols and 1,987 rounds of ammunition meant for the Provisional Committee.²⁷³ The Singapore police and Chinese Protectorate did ease their vigilance and in 1929 they conducted 47 raids against the Communists which resulted in 28 persons being convicted and deported. This included several leaders who had previously escaped arrest and a large quantity of literature was seized.²⁷⁴ The Annual Departmental

268. *Straits Times*, 28 February 1928, p. 12; *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1928*, p. 877; *Straits Times*, 7 March 1928, p. 10.

269. *Straits Times*, 19 March 1928, p. 10.

270. *Straits Times*, 7 March 1928, p. 10.

271. *MBPI*, No. 58 dated 1 April 1928.

272. *Ibid.*; *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1928*, p. 877.

273. *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1928*, p. 877.

274. *Straits Settlements Annual Departmental Report 1929*, Government Printer, Singapore, 1930, p. 297.

Report for 1929 noted nine murders ‘by political and labour agitators or their paid assassins’, an attempt to set fire to a newspaper office and stone throwing to smash windows of trams and Chinese newspaper offices.²⁷⁵

In December 1929 captured documents revealed that the Communist Party in Singapore and Malaya was to become ‘devoted to local emancipation’ and not ‘for the benefit of revolutionary movements in China’.²⁷⁶ This meant that the Comintern in Moscow now directed Communist operations in Singapore and not the Chinese Communist Party, as were other organisations in Siam, Burma, Annam and the Netherlands East Indies, previously under the control of the Nanyang Communist Party.

The End of a Worker’s Led Revolution in China: The Failure of the Li Lisan and the Creation of the Jiangxi Soviet

Li Lisan upon becoming secretary of the Chinese Communist Party decided that the time for a broad-based revolution had come and if cities were captured then workers and peasants would rise up and city after city would fall to communism. There were long delays in communications between the Comintern in Moscow and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai; as well as the CCP Central Committee and the Fourth Red Army in the field. This inevitably led to problems where the Comintern wanted a particular strategy followed but it did not accord with the realities in the field in China. The Red Army was often aggrieved in this period by decisions made by the Central Committee that had no idea of its situation.²⁷⁷ Coupled with the problems of Party organisation after the White Terror and continued attacks by the Guomindang this could see policies adopted that were unsuitable for action. Li Lisan and his aide, Zhou

275 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1929*, pp. 73 & 77.

276 . *MBPI*, No. 77 dated 31 December 1929.

277 . ‘Introduction’, in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxvi – xxxix.

Enlai, both having been schooled in Marxism in Moscow, saw the revolution in China being an urban one based on the workers and the proletariat. They followed the directions of the Comintern and, in turn, tried to ensure that these directions were followed by the Fourth Red Army.²⁷⁸ Add to this Stalin purging the Party and the Comintern in Moscow of any opposition, it meant a period of confusion and lack of strategic direction.²⁷⁹ Zhu De was especially upset as he believed the Red Army's main task was fighting, not propaganda, and that the Central Committee was interfering in military matters, which he believed were his area of expertise.²⁸⁰

To try and make the 'gun subordinate to the Party', and further exacerbating the situation, the Central Committee in May 1929 sent to the front Liu Angong, who had just returned from the Soviet Union where he had been studying military affairs. He had no knowledge of the situation in the Red Army and was made the chief of the Political Department; he tried to reduce both Mao's and Zhu's authority. He was killed in action in October 1929 just before the Central Committee decided in December that the Red Army should be concentrated not dispersed, changing its previously stated strategy.

The Comintern had decided that a 'revolutionary wave' was beginning to rise in China and that the Chinese Communist Party should take action. In reality it was to keep pressure on the Guomindang as the Soviet Union had just taken back control of the Chinese Eastern Railway from the Guomindang in November 1929 after a short war.²⁸¹ The Central Committee under Li Lisan believed that China was ripe for creating 'a direct revolutionary situation and to seize power'.²⁸² The tool to do this was the Red Army and in June 1930 it was reorganised for the task.

278 . *Ibid.*, p. xxxix – xli.

279 . *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiv & xxxv.

280 . *Ibid.*, pp. xliii & xliv

281 . *Ibid.*, pp. xlvii & xlviii.

282 . *Ibid.*, p. xlix.

Since leaving the Jinggangshan the Red Army had expanded but was not under a single commander, as the forces were in four separate areas, semi-independent of each other. The reorganisation saw all the elements of the Red Army under a single commander, Zhu De, with Mao Zedong as its political commissar. The Fourth Army now became the First Army Group; the forces of He Long in Hunan became the Second Army Group; Peng Dehuai's forces that were now in the Jinggangshan formed the Third Army Group and the guerrilla bands north of the Yangtze became the Fourth Army Group.²⁸³

The major aims of the Li Lisan's plan were the capture of the cities of Nanchang by the First Army Group, Wuhan by the Second Army Group and Changsha by the Third Army Group. The First Army Group did not capture Nanchang as the defending forces were too strong and decided that an attack would be fruitless. They took a train station over the river from Nanchang as a demonstration to commemorate 1 August.²⁸⁴ He Long's forces attempted to take Wuhan but were defeated and the counterattack saw them lose a considerable amount of territory previously under their control.²⁸⁵ Peng Dehuai's forces successfully took Changsha on 27 July 1930 but retreated from the city on 6 August after a successful counterattack by Guomindang forces.²⁸⁶ The First Army Group moved to attack Changsha after a successful attack on Wenjiashi where Mao's forces took 1,400 rifles, 20 water-cooled and 17 light machine guns and over 100 Mauser pistols.²⁸⁷ They attacked from 29 August 1930 and abandoned the attack on 12 September after the final

283 . *Ibid.*, p. lv.

284 . Mao Zedong. 'Order to Withdraw to Anyi and Fengxian for Rest and Reconsolidation (1 August 1930)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, pp. 474 & 475.

285 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 298 & 299.

286 . Mao Zedong. 'Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee, on the General Situation with Regard to All New Military Operations of Our Army in Western Jiangxi (19 August 1930, at Huangmao), in *ibid.*, pp. 482 & 483.

287 . Mao Zedong. 'Letter to the Southwest Jiangxi Special Committee, for Transmission to the Central Committee (24 August 1930, in the town of Yonghe, Liuyang)' in *ibid.*, p. 488.

attack on 10 September with heavy losses.²⁸⁸ The Guomindang forces were in strength behind extensive fortifications and the Red Army lacked heavy artillery to destroy them.²⁸⁹ The refusal by Mao and Zhu De to launch another attack on Changsha spelt the end of the strategy of fomenting workers' uprisings by taking over cities and Mao's theory of an agrarian based revolution came to the fore. Li Lisan became discredited, was removed as Party secretary and from the Politburo, and exiled to Moscow.²⁹⁰

The First and Third Army groups then headed to the city of Jian in Central Jiangxi to establish the Jiangxi Soviet base area. Much of the area was already under effective Communist control as Mao's 'Xingguo Investigation' of October 1930 showed.²⁹¹ On 4 October 1930, the Red Army took Jian and the Jiangxi Soviet was officially established there on 7 October 1930.²⁹² The city was abandoned six weeks later on 18 November; the Communists did not try to occupy another major

city until 1947.²⁹³ Mao and the Red Army were now in a position to start the peasant-based revolution.

The Identity of the Red Army and Its Maoist Teachings

Mao Zedong in 1926 wrote about the potential of a class known in Marxist terminology of 'vagrants' or 'the lumpenproletariat'.²⁹⁴ He identified a direct relationship between

288 . Mao Zedong. 'Report to the Central Committee (17 September 1930, at Lilang)', in *ibid.*, p. 530.

289 . *Ibid.*, p. 529.

290 . Klein and Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 516.

291 . Mao Zedong. 'Xingguo Investigation (October 1930)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, pp. 594 - 655.

292 . Mao Zedong. 'Letter to the Central Committee (14 October 1930, at night, in the city of Ji'an)' in *ibid.*, pp. 552 & 553.

293 . Mao Zedong. 'Investigation in Mukou Village (21 November 1930)', in *ibid.*, p. 691

294 . Mao Zedong. 'Analysis of all Classes in Chinese Society' (1 December 1925) in ,

revolutionary zeal and poverty. The five separate class sub-groups he wrote about were: soldiers, bandits, thieves, beggars and prostitutes who, if led properly, were capable of fighting bravely and becoming a revolutionary force. Mao used the experience of the Paris Commune in the Franco-Prussian War to demonstrate his argument, which he wrote about, and which was to be commemorated in the Chinese Communist Party.²⁹⁵ However, initially, as the five sub-classes were not the proletariat that orthodox Marxists identified as revolutionaries, conflict arose within the Chinese Communist Party. This was particularly evident when the nascent Workers' and Peasants' Red Army aligned itself with the two bandit leaders on the Jinggangshan in 1928.²⁹⁶ Intra-Party disputation did not finish until Mao took effective control of the Party in 1935.

Just as he identified class sub-groups as having revolutionary potential, so too Mao – in November 1928 – described the soldiers of the Red Army as coming from six distinct groups. These were: troops formerly under Ye Ting and He Long in Chaozhou and Shantou; the Wuchang Guards Regiment; the Peasants' Army from Liuyang and Pingjiang; the Peasants' Army from southern Hunan and workers from Shuikoushan; captured ex-warlord and Guomindang soldiers; and workers and Peasants from various xian (counties) in the border area.²⁹⁷ The first four provided the most experienced and reliable soldiers; the last provided the bulk of the Red Army. Mao noted that without the ex-warlord and Guomindang soldiers the Red Army would have difficulty finding reinforcements.²⁹⁸ One advantage of captured soldiers was that they had some military training and often brought a rifle as well.

Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, pp. 249 – 262.

295 . Mao Zedong, 'Some Points for Attention in Commemorating the Paris Commune dated 18 March 1926', in, Schramm, *op. cit.*, pp. 365 – 368.

296 . *Ibid.*

297 . Mao Zedong. 'Report of the Jinggangshan Front Committee to the Central Committee (25 November 1928)', in *ibid.*, p. 93.

298 . *Ibid.*

The Fourth Army had its problems in organisation and operations in the Jinggangshan. It was accused of not following the 'Party's Correct Line', 'adventurism', 'opportunism' and 'cliquism'; and not understanding the army was a political tool as it suffered from having a 'purely Military Viewpoint' that needed to be changed.²⁹⁹ It had to recognise it was not just a military force. It was expected to promote the Party through propaganda, organising and arming the masses, and setting up Party organisations. The last of these was adjudged its basic reason for its existence. The cliquism charge was levelled as it did not see its role to arm the masses. The adventurism and opportunism charges were that many of the ex-warlord, Guomindang and bandit troops had a non-proletarian 'consciousness' that alienated the masses and meant that they tried to conserve their strength and not become involved in propaganda and working with the masses.³⁰⁰

A bigger problem was the origin of the bandits who saw themselves as roving rebels involved in guerrilla operations and wanted to use ex-soldiers to expand the army instead of being involved with Party organisation and arming the masses, thereby increasing the army.³⁰¹ To rectify these problems, political training was increased and local parties were allowed to criticise the Red Army. This set an unfortunate precedent process that reached its height during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.³⁰² Under Li Lisan the ex-bandits and 'vagabonds' were seen as a major obstacle to the Party and were not to be part of the Red Army or the Red Guards.³⁰³ The worst case of removing ex-bandits from the army after the denunciation of bandits in the resolution of the Sixth Congress of the CCP,

299 . Mao Zedong. "Draft Resolution of the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist party in the Fourth Red Army (December 1929, at the Gutian Congress in Western Fujian Province) in *ibid.*, pp. 195-197.

300 . *Ibid.*

301 . *Ibid.*, pp. 206 & 207.

302 . *Ibid.*, pp. 197 & 198.

303 . Mao Zedong. 'On the Problem of Vagrants Resolution of the Joint Conference of the Red Fourth Army Front Committee and the Western Fujian Special Committee (June 1930)', in *ibid.*, pp. 453 & 454.

was the killing of Yuan Wencai and Wang Zuo.³⁰⁴ These two ex-bandit chiefs had let the remnants of the Red Army into the Jinggangshan and thus ensured its survival.

If the period before the Jiangxi Soviet was the formative period of the Operational Art of the PLA then the period when it was refined and became the cornerstone of Mao's and Zhu De's strategy may be identified as the five Bandit Extermination or Encirclement campaigns, aimed at destroying the Jiangxi Soviet in the period 1930 to 1933. The Fifth Campaign ended with the breakout of the Red Army and its famous 'Long March' to Yan'an. The first four were successes for the Red Army, which despite being outnumbered, was able to outmanoeuvre and out fight the numerically superior Guomindang forces. In December 1936 the Red Army University started using a textbook written by Mao titled, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, which enunciated Mao's operational art using the bandit extermination campaigns as his reference.³⁰⁵

In January 1930 in a letter to Lin Biao, Mao explained the need to organise the masses in the countryside to create secure base areas. He also wrote about the Fourth Red Army's operational tactics. These were his main points:

The tactics we have derived from the struggle of the past three years are indeed different from any other tactics, ancient or modern, Chinese or foreign. With our tactics, the masses can be aroused for struggle on an ever-broadening scale, and no enemy, however powerful, can cope with ours. Ours are guerrilla tactics. They consist mainly of the following points:

304 . This went against Mao's support of vagrants and bandits. Mao disapproved of the killing of Yuan and Wang at the time, see 'On the Problem of the Rich Peasants Resolution of the Joint Conference of the Red Fourth Army Front Committee and the Western Fujian Special Committee (June 1930)', in *ibid.*, p. 443, note 8.

305 . Mao Zedong. 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary war', in Schram, S.R. *Mao's Road to Power Revolutionary Writings 1912.1949 Volume V Toward the Second United Front January 1935-July 1937*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 1999, pp. 465 – 538.

‘Divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy.’

‘The enemy advances we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass: the enemy tires, we attack, we pursue.’

‘To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around.’

‘Arouse the largest number of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods’.

These tactics are just like casting a net; at any moment we should be able to cast it or draw it in. We cast it wide to win over the masses and draw it in to deal with the enemy. Such are the tactics we have used for the past three years.’³⁰⁶

Mao was employing manoeuvre extensively due to the Red Army’s lack of firepower, an approach which he copied from Sun Tzu and which was employed by many guerrilla forces prior to Mao. Sun Tzu emphasised flank and rear attacks by hitting the enemy by manoeuvre, winning over the support of the local population, and only engaging an enemy when it was advantageous to victory. When the base areas were secure in Jiangxi, Mao further refined his operational strategy.

In December 1930, Mao wrote *Eight Great Conditions for Victory*, which has his first known use of *Luring the Enemy in Deep* and *Protracted War*.³⁰⁷ A reading of *Sun Zi Bing Fa* shows that Mao paraphrased many of Sun Tzu’s paragraphs.³⁰⁸ Mao’s main points, which were repeated again in later documents were:

- a. Luring the Enemy Deep into the Red Areas making ‘all his ships, trains and fortifications useless’;

306 . Mao Zedong. ‘Letter to Comrade Lin Biao’, in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, pp 242 & 243.

307 . *Ibid.*

308 . Giles, *loc.cit.*

- b. Adopting the Tactics of Protracted War whereby ‘the enemy wants to fight a short war, and we will just not fight a short war. The enemy has internal conflicts’;
- c. Besieging the enemy for a long time in a tight encirclement, which he described as ‘After the enemies arrive in the Red areas, they will have no firewood, rice, oil and salt’;
- d. Our Forces are Concentrated and the Enemy’s Force are Dispersed, which Mao called ‘concentrating our forces to destroy the enemy one by one’;
- e. We have Topographic Advantages, and the Enemy Does Not, as ‘there are many mountains and ridges, the roads are narrow, and the terrain is dangerous. Thus the enemy cannot engage in large-scale manoeuvres, and his cannons are useless’.³⁰⁹

These were based on Mao’s and Zhu De’s experience in the Jinggangshan. They were known and well used methods of warfare and were certainly not developed by Mao. They depended on the attacking force not being able to supply itself or provide support from other units. Mao used ‘luring the enemy in deep’ to fight the enemy at the time and place of the Red Army’s choice. This was clearly enunciated in Mao’s order of 1 November 1930, ‘Order to Lure the Enemy in Deep into the Red Area, Wait Until They Are Exhausted, and Annihilate Them’.³¹⁰

The Guomindang initially had a three-month limit on operations, which was a weakness the Red Army exploited. Guomindang forces would spend months searching for the Red Army in vain, and were then ambushed when exhausted. Red Army units used night attacks and offensive hit and run operations to keep Guomindang forces off balance and employed a scorched earth policy. The mountainous topography the Red Army favoured, a defensive position used for centuries, meant in the First Encirclement campaign the Guomindang regiments were scattered and unable to provide mutual support. Mao called it ‘concentrating our forces to destroy the enemy one by one’. Splitting a force with the

309 . *Ibid.*, especially points 21 to 24, pp. 6 & 7; Mao Zedong, *op.cit.*, pp. 718-721.

310 . Mao Zedong. ‘Order to Lure the enemy in Deep into the Red Area, Wait Until They Are Exhausted, and Annihilate Them (1 November 1930 2 P.M., Yuanqian Village, Luofang, Xinyu xian)’, in Schram, 1995 *op. cit.*, pp 656 – 657.

inability to provide mutual support in the event of attack will generally lead to defeat. The Red Army by moving fast, and knowing the terrain was able to block Guomindang forces in narrow passes and then send a force to gather them up from the rear.

Mao wrote of protracted war: 'We will not fight a fast war with them, but will take some time to kill many Chiang Kai-sheks, eliminate spies in the Red Army, and unite more closely. The enemy is defeated once again, and we have already won a major victory.'³¹¹ Protracted war was the only war the Red Army could conceivably fight. Mao depended on the cooperation of 'the masses', which was the cornerstone of his strategy. At best they were apathetic towards any form of government interference with their lives, and at worst openly hostile. Without their support any thought of the Chinese Communist Party coming to power in China was doomed. Hence, political propaganda and control was central to Mao's thought.

Mao's Vision of the Operational Art - People's War

People's War was the concept of letting an enemy be drawn deep into Chinese Territory and then overwhelmed by the masses, mobilised to defeat an aggressor when it was at the end of its logistics chain. It traded land for time. It also enabled the mobilising of the masses in peacetime for political control, which was the precursor of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It has some major flaws. These include the loss of control and destruction of areas that have been taken over even after the mobilising of the masses; and the assumption that the enemy, which was the Soviet Union, would want to be drawn in deep into the Chinese countryside. Mao based his concept on the defeat of Guomindang Forces in the early encirclement campaigns in the Jiangxi Soviet from 1930-1932 but forgot, or did not care to remember, the destruction the Guomindang forces caused during these assaults on the Soviet. For these reasons alone the regular

311 . *Ibid.*, p. 718.

PLA never took People's War near and dear to its heart and stayed with the Russian view of the Operational Art.

The expression 'People's War', *Volkskrieg*, was taken from Moltke the Elder who analysed it as 'involving the whole nation in the war effort, militarily, economically and emotionally'.³¹² It came out of his experiences of the Franco-Prussian War after the defeat of the French Army after the Battle of Sedan. Bismarck's demands were so harsh that the French government, and the French people, would and could not accede to them. French nationalism would not allow it, so the Germans marched on Paris and laid siege to it. It was to be a different war to what the Germans had expected as Gambetta and Freycinet organised the whole nation's resistance to the Germans. Men and materiel from the unoccupied areas of France were mobilised and the French Army was replenished with mass conscription. These conscripts fought alongside foreign volunteer brigades and *francs-tireurs* (irregulars).³¹³ Moltke abhorred People's War with its revolutionary and irregular tendencies embodied by the arming of the French population—the *francs-tireurs*.

The winter of 1870-71 saw German supply lines extended and they struggled to keep them open due to attacks by the *francs-tireurs*.³¹⁴ German regular troops were forced to conduct combat operations after thinking the war was over. On many fronts, guerrilla warfare was the only type of French resistance and atrocities occurred on both sides as terror begat terror.³¹⁵ German losses mounted, and breaches to their extended defences were plugged with great difficulty, but it did not affect the eventual German victory. Moltke's comment about the situation was: 'A whole people under arms should not be underestimated'; his reaction was to use a policy of destruction. People's War had

312. Förster, S. 'Facing 'People's War': Moltke the Elder and Germany's Military Options after 1871', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, June 1987, p. 226 note 1.

313. *Ibid.*, p. 228, note 23.

314. *Ibid.*

315. *Ibid.*

Moltke's reaction to it engendered on both sides.³¹⁶ (Mao Zedong was well aware of the revolutionary potential of the *francs-tireurs* and the Paris Commune in the Franco-Prussian War. As noted above, he identified a direct relationship between revolutionary zeal and poverty which his five class sub-groups embodied.)

The first example of an entire country organised in People's War - a better expression being 'Total War' - was Great Britain in 1940, followed by the Soviet Union in 1941. The entire economy and population were mobilised for war. The British system was initially voluntary and was based around people who had civilian occupations during the day and then civil defence or military duties after their day employment finished. These included the Local Defence Volunteers, later renamed the Home Guard, and the civil defence services including the Observer Corps, the Air Raid Precaution System which included air raid wardens and rescue teams, the Auxiliary Fire Service, and the Women's Voluntary Service.³¹⁷

Mao wrote in April 1929 that 'combat was only a means' and that 'the Red Army cannot survive without a united leading organisation for the Party and the army; otherwise, it will fall into anarchy and will certainly fail'.³¹⁸ He further wrote that for the Red Army, the ratio of political work when working with the masses compared to combat, was ten to one.³¹⁹ This was when the Red Army was creating base areas and the main objective was to mobilise the masses, whereas the only mission of the original Red Army under Ye Ting and He Long, 'was to fight'.³²⁰ This was the genesis of Mao's vision of what a People's War was, which also enabled closer political control of the masses.

316 . *Ibid.*, pp. 215 & 228, note 23.

317 . 'Invasion Alert: The Home Defences', *Military Illustrated Past Present*, No. 28, September 1990, pp. 30 – 35; 'Civil Defence Services', *Ibid.*, pp. 47 – 49.

318 . Mao Zedong. 'A Letter from the Front Committee to the Central Committee (Ruijin 5 April 1930)', in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

319 . *Ibid.*

320 . As it retreated from Nanchang. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

Mao and Zhu De wrote:

The purpose of the army's work here (in Jiangxi) is to win over the masses and to train ourselves, it follows that all rules regarding military bearing and discipline must be strictly observed. Even the slightest slackening will have adverse effects on the masses. We have therefore issued repeated orders in the hope that officers and men alike will follow the Three Rules of Discipline and the Six Main Points for Attention in order to make widely known in the ordinary masses the spirit and principles of the Red Army.³²¹

The Three Rules were:

- a. obey orders in all your actions;
- b. don't take anything from the workers and peasants;
- c. when attacking the local bullies, turn over (whatever you take from them).

The Six Points for Attention were:

- a. put back the doors (you have taken down for beds);
- b. put back the straw (you have used for bedding);
- c. speak politely;
- d. pay fairly for what you buy;
- e. return everything you borrow; and
- f. pay for anything you damage.

Mao is reckoned to have written the three rules on 24 October 1927 as he was about to lead his forces up the Jinggangshan. According to Chinese documents the six points of attention were put forward on 25 January 1928 with Mao formally promulgating the sets together in April 1928. In January 1929 Mao added two extra Rules for Attention: (7) don't bathe within sight of women, and (8) defecate only in latrines.³²² 'Don't bathe within sight of women' was replaced by 'don't search the pockets of captives'. This was

321 . Zhu De & Mao Zedong. 'Order on Rectifying Military Bearing and Discipline (March 21, 1930)' in Scrahm, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 283.

322 . *Ibid*; Carlson, E.F. *Twin Stars of China*, Dodd & Mead, New York, 1940, Hypernion Press reprint, Wesport, p 81.

translated in 1938 by Evans Carlson as: ‘Do not kill or mistreat prisoners.’³²³ Killing and mistreating prisoners was counter-productive as ex-prisoners, as noted earlier, were an important source of new recruits for the Red Army. These rules for the Red Army made sure that the people in the liberated areas were looked after and that its soldiers did not abuse them in any way.

Military discipline is paramount in any military force and the Red Army also suffered from the same problem as most armies throughout history. On 21 March 1930, Order Number Three of the Fourth Red Army Headquarters was promulgated, carrying the signatures of Zhu De and Mao Zedong, titled ‘Rectifying Military Bearing and Discipline’.³²⁴ Its importance should not be underestimated with its aim to stop soldiers visiting prostitutes, catching venereal disease and spreading it amongst the population, besides its effect on their work.

Turning to the protection of the Jiangxi Soviet, this was not solely in the hands of the Red Army and it was here that Mao’s employment of People’s War was to bear fruit. To enable Mao’s vision of using the whole population in some way to defeat the enemy, the villages were militarised into a series of ‘local armed units’. These were the Red Guards and Young Pioneers who were tasked to carry out guerrilla operations and to assist the Red Army main forces in battle. They originally had a similar structure to the Red Army but this was found too cumbersome and the organization was changed to reflect the small unit tactics of the Red Guard and Young Pioneer units.³²⁵

The Young Pioneers and Red Guards had two types of battalion, model and normal. Model teams of the Red Guards and Young Pioneers were the elite and were used to as a model for the normal units to aspire to. Their structure was three platoons, of two squads

323 . Carlson, *op.cit.*, pp. 80 & 81.,

324 . Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, pp. 283 & 284.

325 . Schram, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 340.

each of eleven fighters, with each squad split into two sections. Three companies of model Red Guards and one company of model Young Pioneers made a model battalion with three battalions to the regiment.³²⁶ The structure for the normal Red Guard armies was three squads to the platoon and four platoons to the company. Three were combat platoons and the fourth was a first aid platoon. It was laid down in orders that the first aid platoon should consist of middle-aged women. The orders further laid down that there should be four companies to the battalion, three battalions to the regiment and three regiments to the division.³²⁷

In October 1930, in his investigation of the Xingguo tenth district known as the Yongfeng district, Mao described how an entire district had mobilised the masses by militarising the villages.³²⁸ There were eight to 15 men in a squad, three squads to a platoon and three platoons to a company. They were all male and they ranged in age from 23 to 50. The Children's and Youth Corps normally did the day sentry with two girls and two boys from the Children's Corps led by a member of the Youth Corps. Their task was to check internal travel passes. They reported directly to a detachment commander who was aided by two vice detachment commanders.³²⁹

At night, usually two men stood first shift and then another two the second night shift. In times of threat four Red Guards stood guard during the day and in the night 20 or more if the situation warranted it. The Red Guard brigades had separate women's and men's units. The women did not normally stand sentry duty except when the men were out of the village. The Youth and Children's Corps did not separate males or females with the Children's units ranging in age from eight to 15. The best of the Red Guards and Youth Groups became the District Special Agent battalion or in one of three Red Army Independent Regiments, each of over 1,000 men. The rest became part of the Red Army

326 . *Ibid.*

327 . *Ibid.*, pp. 340 & 341.

328 . 'Xingguo Investigation (October 1930)', in Schram 1995, *op. cit.*, pp. 651 - 655.

329 . Schram, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 340.

Reserve Corps, as required. The best unit was the Special Agent Battalion; it was armed primarily with shotguns, other locally made guns and a few locally made cannon.

The militarisation of the villages was used by the Viet Minh against the French, and by the Viet Cong against South Vietnamese, United States and Australian forces, amongst others during the Vietnam War.

Soviet Operational Art: The Red Army in the Jiangxi Soviet

As stated at the opening of this chapter, there were two differing versions of the Soviet Operational Art in the Red Army. In *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, Mao further refined his operational art.³³⁰ By using this and other material, it is possible to trace how the bandit extermination campaigns refined the operational art of the People's Liberation Army.

Mao described 'Left Opportunism' in the form of Li Lisan and then the Returned Student Faction as being responsible for the setbacks the Red Army suffered. Li Lisan's attack on Nanchang and the failure of the Red Army in the Fifth Encirclement are explained, although he wrote that the seeds were sown in the Fourth Encirclement Campaign.³³¹

Mao describes the strategic defensive as the operational art of the PLA at the time, as it was under constant attack but it was not a passive defence. Mao always proscribed, as the current Chinese leadership does, that China is not an expansionist power; so strategic defence is the cornerstone of the operational art. Under this, Mao wrote of the nine rules of strategic defence:

- a. active and passive defence;

330 . Mao Zedong. 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War', in Schram, *op. cit.*, 1999, pp. 465 – 538.

331 . *Ibid.*, p. 488.

- b. preparations for countering 'encirclement and suppression';
- c. strategic retreat;
- d. strategic counteroffensive;
- e. the problem of starting a counteroffensive;
- f. the problem of concentrating troops;
- g. mobile warfare;
- h. wars of quick decision; and
- i. wars of annihilation.

The Left factions derided this type of war as 'guerrilla-ism'. Mao described their operational art as:

- a. pit one against ten, pit ten against a hundred, fight bravely and daringly, exploit victories by hot pursuit;
- b. attack on all fronts;
- c. seize key cities; and
- d. strike with two fists.

When the enemy attacks, the methods of dealing with him are:

- e. engage the enemy outside the gates;
- f. get control by striking first;
- g. don't let our pots and pans be smashed;
- h. don't give up an inch of territory (the meaning of the previous rule); and
- i. divide our forces into six routes.³³²

Mao's strategy in 1937 had changed little from 1930. Except for splitting of the forces, the Left Opportunist operational art would find little in difference to the operational art of the modern PLA. The modern armoured mobile forces of the PLA are capable of this strategy, but the Red Army and the Peoples' Liberation Army into the 1980s were foot soldiers and

332 . *Ibid.*, p. 501.

thus were forced by circumstance to use strategic defence. Using the performance of the Red Army in the encirclement campaigns Mao's evolution of his operational art is best described.

In December 1930 the Jiangxi Soviet was a collection of semi-separate base areas in rural central and south western Jiangxi Province.³³³ The first campaign, which started in December 1930, saw the Guomindang force of 12 divisions and two brigades totalling 100,000 men shattered with heavy losses of men and materiel.³³⁴ As Mao Zedong's and Zhu De's order of 26 December 1930 showed, the Guomindang forces were to be lured deep into Xiaobu and the advance forces not attacked early, letting the main force escape.³³⁵ The order of 29 December 1930 showed that this was the 18th Division, under Zhang Huizan, which was to be attacked in a classic pincer movement, and a blocking force manoeuvred in its rear to stop any reinforcements. It was a complete success with Zhang Huizan himself captured, along with 9,000 of his soldiers. On 28 January 1931 after a public trial and humiliation, he was beheaded and his head floated down the Yangtze River towards the Guomindang's lines atop a small clan tablet from the family temple.³³⁶ Mao was able to 'lure the enemy in deep' despite the Li Lisan line (no retreat but attack strategy).³³⁷ Mao was successful in having the operational art of strategic retreat for the first three bandit campaigns.³³⁸ The results of the three campaigns also show how the Red Army became more professional. Mao was fortunate in that the two smashed divisions had advanced into an area where popular support for the Red Army was strong,

333 . Mao Zedong. 'Introduction', in Schram, *op. cit.*, , 1997, p. xxix.

334 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op.cit.*, p. 159.

335 . Mao Zedong. 'Red Letter Order No. 10 of the First Front Army of the Red Army (26 December 1930)', in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 725.

336 . Mao Zedong. 'News of the Victory of the Red Army (Extracts) (30 December 1930)', in, Schram, 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 731.

337 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 508.

338 . *Ibid.*, p. 499.

so it was able to manoeuvre and concentrate its forces without the Guomindang knowing.³³⁹

The Red Army now had to become more professional, especially in non-combat units. Shortcomings noted in the First Encirclement Campaign included the lack of terrain intelligence, operational planning and the distribution of these plans. Logistical planning and provision in the administrative, medical and catering areas required improvement.³⁴⁰ Command and control in the battle was poor as was post-battle intelligence, the collection of enemy equipment and the handling of wounded and prisoners. This meant the establishment of dedicated logistics and the training of staff officers.³⁴¹ Early improvements were to increase the number of order groups from divisional to company levels, increased training for medical personnel in combat rescue, training porters to move in ranks and how to move aside so combat troops could pass them, air raid drills, weapons training and the improved training of cooks so that their meals were better and that cooks should be exempted from performing fatigue duties.³⁴²

The second campaign from April to May 1931 saw the destruction of the Guomindang's 28th and 43rd divisions and the capture of Jianning in Western Fujian Province.³⁴³ The Guomindang forces conducted a systematic destruction of food crops in the areas they entered forcing the Red Army to assist the peasants to replant their fields.³⁴⁴ Although the Guomindang forces had consolidated the areas they captured, they were enveloped and units were attacked individually from 15 May 1931 in a series of hammer and anvil

339 . *Ibid.*, pp. 512 & 513.

340 . Mao Zedong. 'The Military Preparatory Work That Must Be Done to Achieve Victory in the Second Phase of Operations red letter Order No. 1 of the First Front Army of the Red Army (17 March 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op.cit.*, p. 28.

341 . *Ibid.*, pp. 30 & 31.

342 . *Ibid.*, pp. 31 & 32.

343 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op.cit.*, p. 340.

344 . Mao Zedong. 'Order to Mobilise the Troops to Help the Masses Plant and Plough the Fields (5 May 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op.cit.*, pp. 69 & 70.

manoeuvres, after the Red Army had undertaken a large enveloping movement.³⁴⁵ Hammer and anvil type attacks after an enveloping manoeuvre were the type of attacks favoured in the Soviet Operational style. The Red Army was able to manoeuvre unmolested between the larger Guomindang units, which indicated the poor flank security and coordination of the Guomindang forces.³⁴⁶ A smaller unit was first destroyed which opened up their right flank and saw both the 28th and 43rd divisions rolled up and their retreat to Futian blocked as the Red Army out-manoeuvred them a second time during the operation. The Red Army quickly attacked, and moved to Jinniang where the Guomindang unit defending the city attacked them. The Guomindang unit did not realise it was the main force of the Red Army, after diversionary attacks were launched against other major Guomindang forces, to hide the main assault being undertaken against Jinniang. After Jinniang was taken, with large amounts of weapons and medical supplies, the Red Army consolidated its gains in Western Fujian.³⁴⁷ The main points in the follow-up were the need to establish movement control in recently captured areas and the collection of enemy equipment captured or discarded on the battlefield.³⁴⁸

The third campaign launched in July 1931, just one month after the Second Campaign had finished, caught the Red Army off guard. Instead of ex-warlord troops, the Guomindang committed some of some of Chiang Kai-shek's best officers and men. The Guomindang used an attrition-based strategy, moving simultaneously along the entire front, meaning their flanks were secure but the pace of the offensive would be slow.³⁴⁹

345 . Mao Zedong. 'Orders to the First Front Army of the Red Army to Attack Futian and to Eliminate the Two Divisions of Wang Jinyu and Gong Bingfan', (14 May 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op.cit.*, pp. 74 & 75.

346 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, pp. 514 & 515.

347 . Mao Zedong. 'Minutes of the First Eight Meetings of the General Front Committee of the First Front Army (25 May - 10 June 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 86 - 94.

348 . Mao Zedong. 'The Question of the Soviet Area Central Bureau's Special Emergency Circular About 'Mobilising' and Preparing for the Third Campaign 4 July 1931', in Schram 1997, *op.cit.*, pp. 116 & 117.

349 . Mao Zedong and Zhu De. 'Letter of Instruction from Zhu De and Mao Zedong to Geng Kai and Longjun (12 July 1931, 6.00 A.M. at Jianfeng)', in Schram 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 118 & 119.

The Guomindang forces did however use lightly equipped mobile forces, which caused the Red Army problems. The base areas to which the Red Army went on the strategic defensive, were squeezed until September when there was unexpected relief; the Guomindang forces had to be withdrawn to put down a rebellion in Guangdong.³⁵⁰ The Red Army had slipped behind the Guomindang's forward units by splitting into smaller units and sought to avoid battle in force, instead using guerrilla warfare in the rear areas to attack the logistics areas and lines of communications, until the opportunity arose to counterattack in strength.³⁵¹ By early August, the Guomindang forces had been on campaign for two months without engaging the main units of the Red Army. On 17 August 1931, the order went out for the Red Army to reduce the baggage chain and the number of horses so as to facilitate movement at night and to counteract the 'highly mobile forces' the Guomindang was using.³⁵² Moving by night and resting by day became a cornerstone of the Red Army. It enabled them to manoeuvre in the face of an air threat, becoming central to the operational art of the Red Army and later the People's Liberation Army.³⁵³

The campaign ended prematurely due to Wang Jingwei and Li Jiongren creating an anti-Chiang Kai-shek government in Gangzhou on 1 June 1931. Mao disputes this in his 1937 work but other archival material refutes Mao.³⁵⁴ The rebellion lasted until September 1931 when Japanese aggression in Manchuria forced all the Chinese leaders to give priority to national unity and survival.³⁵⁵ This forced a general withdrawal to regroup

350 . Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. xli & xlii; Collier & Chin-Chih *op. cit.*, pp. 159 & 160.

351 . Central Military Commission. 'Order from the Central Military Commission to the Red Army and the Local Armed Forces in Xing(guo), Yu(du), Gan(xian), Wan(an), and Tai(he) (12 August 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 131 – 135.

352 . Mao Zedong & Zhu De. 'Order to Reduce Our Baggage and Number of Horse (17 August 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 136 & 137.

353 . *Ibid.*, p. 136.

354 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, pp. 518; For example Collier & Chin-Chih *op. cit.*, pp. 159 & 160.

355 . 'Minutes of the First Eight Meetings of the General Front Committee of the First Front Army', *op. cit.*, note 33, pp. 93 & 94; Collier & Chin-Chih, *loc. cit.*

and then restore Guomindang control in Guangdong. Taking advantage of this the Red Army attacked the withdrawing units in early September 1931. On 11 and 12 September 1931 orders were issued to the Red Army to manoeuvre behind Hen Deqin's 52nd Division and cut off its withdrawal. The Ninth Division was also severely damaged as it withdrew. The Red Army had a respite from Guomindang attacks for 15 months, which enabled it to reorganise and retrain. This was fortuitous given the internal political problems of the Chinese Communist Party that were to impinge directly on the Red Army.

The Road to the Long March: From Expansion to the Fifth Encirclement Campaign

In a political and propaganda coup the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic declared war on Japan on 15 April 1932 and called for the Chinese people to rise up and overthrow the Guomindang as only a national revolutionary war could defeat the Japanese.³⁵⁶ This was only a gesture, as the document itself noted that there was nothing that the Red Army could do to stop the Japanese, but by declaring war against Japan, the Chinese Communist Party made itself the only Chinese political group willing to fight Japanese and other Imperialist (Western) encroachment on China.³⁵⁷

Mao's and Zhu's strategy of 'luring the enemy in deep' into the mountains and ambush them piecemeal was subject to criticism after the Third Campaign. Guomindang forces had entered deep into the Jiangxi Soviet and had wreaked considerable damage against its infrastructure, for comparatively few losses until their withdrawal, as they had forced the Red Army to fight on terrain unfavourable to them. After the Third Encirclement Campaign the Jiangxi Soviet had a respite against Guomindang attacks. It embarked on a

356 . Mao Zedong. 'Manifesto of the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic Declaring War on Japan', in Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 207 & 208.

357 . *Ibid.*, pp. 206 – 208.

series of attacks to expand the territory under its control and internal policing to enforce control over its existing territory. Mao of course refuted this. He wrote that the strategic withdrawal had exhausted the Guomindang forces and described a Guomindang brigade commander as remarking of his forces that ‘the fat were worm thin and thin were worn to death’.³⁵⁸ Mao admitted that his forces were caught off guard and that they carried out an ‘extreme type of retreat’ to the rear area of the Soviet as they were attacked by a force ten times its size.³⁵⁹ It was exhausted at the end of its withdrawal and required time to rest.³⁶⁰

In August 1932 the Red Army expanded the Jiangxi Soviet around Le’an in the north to gain more defensive space against further attacks by the Guomindang, which attacked from the north.³⁶¹ They were ordered to attack Nanchang, which they refused as it would have caused the destruction of the Red Army. Rather, Mao proposed that the Red Army attack enemy units in their staging areas instead of attacking cities, as had been advocated by the Returned Student Faction or ‘Internationalist’ group that had been trained in Russia.³⁶² This led to the Ningdu Conference, named from where it was held, to sort out the military strategy of the Red Army. The conference saw the Returned Student Faction strip Mao of his power but then agreed to postpone its actions if he agreed to work under Zhou Enlai.³⁶³ This was due to Mao’s military prowess and the almost complete lack of practical military knowledge of the Returned Student Faction.³⁶⁴

In the period November 1932 to early January, the strategy of the Red Army and the Returned Student Faction saw the further expansion of the Jiangxi Soviet into the

358 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 502.

359 . *Ibid.*, p. 503.

360 . *Ibid.*, pp. 507.

361 . ‘Introduction’, in Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, p. lxx.

362 . *Ibid.*, pp. lvii - lviii.

363. *Ibid.*, pp. lvi – lviii.

364 . *Ibid.*, p. lxxvii.

northeast in eastern Jiangxi and northern Fujian. The Red Army was thus in a position to try and disrupt the expected attack on the Jiangxi Soviet as Guomindang forces concentrated for the Fourth Encirclement Campaign.³⁶⁵ The Red Army did not attack them as the politburo under the Returned Student Faction forbade it and Mao was not in the field. He was in hospital with a recurring attack of tuberculosis and in no position to challenge the faction's orders.³⁶⁶

When Fourth Encirclement Campaign commenced in December 1932, the Guomindang forces totalled 31 divisions and 400,000 troops, including blocking forces, with the main strike force being composed of 17 divisions of over 154,000 soldiers. The Encirclement Campaign attack coincided with the arrival of the last of the Central Committee, the Returned Students who favoured offensive operations and conventional warfare against the Guomindang, notably its leader in China, Bo Gu. They ordered Mao and Zhu, who had returned in early January, to confront the Guomindang frontally. Mao and Zhu promptly ignored the order as they knew the Red Army was not capable of defeating the Guomindang frontally. Instead they headed to the familiar territory of the Red Army's old staging areas.³⁶⁷ The Guomindang assisted Mao's strategy by splitting its force into three armies, which were not mutually supporting, and followed linear lines of assault due to the terrain. In familiar terrain, the Red Army, using its superior mobility and tactics easily manoeuvred around the rear of enemy units, isolating them from support and destroying them piecemeal. The Guomindang's 52nd Division was ambushed on 27 February 1933; it was caught in an area of defiles, the narrow walls of which degraded their combat effectiveness. It suffered heavy casualties losing 6,000 men in 48 hours.³⁶⁸ The Guomindang's 59th Division was also severely defeated one month later and this brought the fourth campaign to a finish.³⁶⁹

365 . *Ibid.*, p. lxxi.

366 . *Ibid.*, p. lxi.

367 . *Ibid.*, pp. lxx and lxxi.

368 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

369 . *Ibid.*

The Red Army had been able to win the four encirclement campaigns by using superior tactics and manoeuvre, enjoying better morale and, most importantly, having the trust and assistance of ‘the masses’ (peasants) in the countryside. They provided rear area security, porters, intelligence and guided Red Army units through areas with which they were not familiar. These are some of the roles that the People’s Militia after 1949 were designated to perform. Unfortunately for Mao, his disobedience of the Central Committee saw him lose completely his military position within the Chinese Communist Party. The Returned Student Faction even claimed it was their strategy that won the campaign.

Whitson has argued that Mao’s vision of a People’s War that he promoted in the 1960s did not occur in the Jiangxi Soviet and instead conventional combat occurred with the Red Army’s main forces – except perhaps during the main forces’ retreat during the Third Encirclement Campaign.³⁷⁰ The history of the first four encirclement campaigns bears this out. Mao saw the first campaign as justifying his methods yet it started off with a spoiling pre-emptive strike, albeit on the expected path of attack. Although the attack was in vain it enabled the Red Army to attack the Guomindang forces from the west. The second was similar but the third attack used the strategy of ‘luring the enemy in deep’ as the Red Army was on the strategic defensive and trading space for time until they could regroup. The destruction to the Jiangxi Soviet was extensive, known as ‘the breaking of pots and pans’ which is the key flaw to ‘luring the enemy in deep’. It was called off due to other priorities, otherwise it could have achieved far more. Although the Red Army won the Fourth Encirclement Campaign, the Guomindang’s lack of route security in all the campaigns was as much to blame as Red Army tactics. The next campaign would be different with no ready victories for the Red Army.

When the Red Army was reorganised in 1933, the army in the Jiangxi Soviet became known as the First Red Army under the control of Bo Gu, Otto Braun and Zhou Enlai,

370 . Whitson, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

supported by the Returned Student Faction. There were two smaller Red Armies, the Second Red Army under He Long in Guizhou and the Fourth Red Army under Zhang Guotao in the Szechuan-Shensi border area.³⁷¹

The Battle in the Cities against the CCP and the Battle for Shanghai against the Japanese in 1932

The policy of *Annei Rangwei* brought together some strange bedfellows. The security services of the International and French Settlements, and by association the imperial security networks of the British and French worked with the Guomintang's Public Security Bureau (PSB) to defeat the Communists. This apparent contradiction was in line with the policy of *Annei Rangwei* as the destruction of the CCP overruled the Guomintang's avowed policy of removing foreign settlements from China. This did not prevent the British authorities suppressing the Guomintang in Malaya and the Straits Settlements.³⁷² Two incidents in the first half of 1931 were to destroy the influence of the Chinese Communist Party in the cities of China and drive it underground to the effect that it was to remain ineffectual in the cities for many years.

In 1930 the Shanghai Municipal Police conducted 69 raids and arrested 540 people for disseminating Communist literature, participating in demonstrations and related offences, and collected 895 different kinds of Communist literature.³⁷³ The year 1931 was even busier for the SMP's Special Branch. Acting independently and with the assistance of

371 . Sun Shuyun. *The Long March*, Harper Press, London, 2006, pp. 93 & 131.

372 . For a detailed explanation of the British Government's attitude to the suppression of both the Guomintang and the Malayan Communist Party, and its predecessors in Malaya and the Straits Settlements, see Yong, C.F and McKenna, R.B. *The Kuomintang Movement in British Malaya, 1912-1949*, Singapore University Press, Singapore, 1990; Yong, C.F. *The Origins of Malayan Communism*, South Seas Society, Singapore, 1997.

373 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1931*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1932, p. 95.

the Guomindang's Public Security Bureau, the SMP arrested 276 Communists, discovered 95 places from where they operated and seized 963,601 copies of 815 different types of Communist literature.³⁷⁴ It scored two major successes against Communist operations in the Settlement, the latter affecting Communist operations in North and Southeast Asia. In April 1931, acting on its own intelligence, the SMP conducted 22 raids, arresting 54 persons and seizing approximately 500,000 leaflets. As successful as this operation was, it was dwarfed in June, when the Shanghai Municipal Police, working with British Military Intelligence broke up the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern, almost destroying the Communist parties in China, Japan and Southeast Asia. It was not until the second half of the 1930s that the Soviet Union could regain its influence and communications. The clandestine Communist Party in Japan, of which the Japanese internal security police had no knowledge, was crippled until after the Second World War. The Jiangxi Soviet lost its major source of funding which had amounted to over three million pounds a year; this was a considerable amount of money in China at the time.³⁷⁵

Documents captured during a police raid on the first Central Committee of the Malayan Communist Party on 29 April 1931 in Singapore established that both the Malayan and Chinese Communist Parties were under Comintern control via its Far Eastern Bureau.³⁷⁶ In June 1931 the Special Branch in Singapore arrested a French Communist, Joseph Ducroux, alias Serge Le Franc, and two members of the Malayan Communist Party.³⁷⁷

374 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1931*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1932, p. 64.

375 . Field, L.F. 'That's the way it was', Imperial War Museum Catalogue Reference LFF/1, circa 1970, pp. 41 & 42.

376 . Yong, *loc. cit.*, pp. 129 & 131; *Malayan Bulletin of Political Intelligence*, No. 78, dated May 1930.

377 . Onraet, R.H. de S. *Singapore – a police background*, Dorothy Crisp & Co., London, 1947, *op. cit.*, p. 113

Amongst Ducroux's documents was his diary, which contained the postal address of the Far Eastern Bureau in Shanghai and Ho Chi Minh's address in Hong Kong.³⁷⁸

The SMP's Special Branch and British Army Intelligence were working together in the International Settlement and knew that Hillaire Noulens was involved with the Comintern's operations in North and Southeast Asia and had him under surveillance for almost two years before his arrest.³⁷⁹ The SMP had copies of the messages and letters sent to him but, being in code, could not decipher them to gain the evidence needed to for an arrest. However, one day he inadvertently left evidence which would have otherwise been burnt. The SMP found that the books he used to decipher the codes were the German language version of *Bentley's Commercial Guide* and *The Lion and the Lamb* by E. Phillips Oppenheim.³⁸⁰ This knowledge enabled the decoding of intercepted communications.

On 15 June 1931 the SMP's Special Branch raided the office of Hillaire Noulens and to their surprise they discovered he was the Comintern's man in Asia. A total of 211 documents and 1,081 books and papers referring to Communist activities in China, Japan and North and Southeast Asia were seized.³⁸¹ These captured documents and payroll records enabled the breaking up and capture of couriers and agents throughout China, Japan, Korea and in Southeast Asia and in Chinese organisations including Guomindang secret services and the Shanghai Municipal Police.³⁸² Worse was to come with the arrest of Gu Shunzhang.

378 . Metzger, L. 'Joseph Ducroux, a French Agent of the Comintern in Singapore (1931-1932)', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 69, Pt 1, June 1996, p. 6.

379 . Field, L.F, *op. cit*, p. 37.

380 . Field, L.F, *op. cit*, pp. 37 – 42.

381 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1931*, p. 64, Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

382 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

Arrested in April in Hankou, Gu Shunzhang was the leader and chief assassin of the CCP's Special Services Unit or *Hongdui* (Red Brigade). It was responsible for supporting underground work by providing 'safe houses, documents, weapons and even food and clothing', as well as surveying Party loyalty and disciplining those who strayed. This meant death for any members that defected.³⁸³ Further, Gu Shunzhang was also a senior member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. He had been sent with a team to assassinate Chiang Kai-shek and decided to defect to save his life.³⁸⁴ A Communist agent in Chiang Kai-shek's office alerted the Central Committee in Shanghai, so some were able to leave before they could be captured, but many other Party members were not so lucky.

When the CCP found out that Gu Shunzhang had defected to the Guomindang in June, in retaliation they kidnapped and murdered his wife and parents in-laws. On 22 November, their bodies were dug up with other CCP members punished by the Red Brigade.³⁸⁵ Upon learning of the death of his family Gu acted with ruthlessness. He knew many of the underground cells in Chinese cities, thus the Chinese Communist Party organisations in Chinese cities were broken. These included agents in various Guomindang departments; the Red Army's Second Army group cell in Wuhan; and Xiang Zhongfa, the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party.³⁸⁶ Party members who had been jailed but had hidden their true identity were identified, leading to their deaths - including Yun Daiying, the leader of the Revolutionary Wing of the CCP and a Central Committee member.³⁸⁷ In the three-month period from June to August 1931 the French Security

383 . 'Xu Enzeng. 'Wo he Gongdang douzheng de huiyi', cited in Wakeman. *op. cit.*, p. 139 & *fn* 44 p. 368. '“Communist” Graveyard Remains of Nine Victories Discovered in Secret Cemetery', *North China Herald*, Vol. CLXXXVI, No. 3355, 24 Nov 1931, p. 276.

384 . *Ibid.*, p. 151; Mao Zedong, Xiang Ying & Zhang Guotao. 'Order for the Arrest of Gu Shuzhang, a Traitor to the Revolution A General Order issued by the Council of People's Commissars of the Provisional Central Soviet Government (Unnumbered) (10 December 1931)', in Schram 1997, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

385 . *North China Herald*, 24 Nov 1931; *ibid.*

386 . Mao, Xiang & Zhang, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

387 . *Ibid.*

Service estimated that the number of Communists executed due to Gu's defection was estimated at 'several thousands'.³⁸⁸ Many of those who survived fled to the Jiangxi Soviet and thus the Central Committee and the Red Army were finally together. This caused the friction between them which did not end for many years.

If 1931 had been an adverse year for the Chinese Communist Party in Shanghai, 1932 and 1933 were to be worse. The Japanese attack on the Chinese areas of Shanghai from 28 January to 2 March 1932 disrupted the CCP so much that it was unable to reorganise itself for contact with Communist groups in Southeast Asia. Moreover, from May 1932 to October 1933, there were 16 major joint operations between the police forces of the International Settlement, French Concession and the Guomindang.³⁸⁹ The Chinese Communist Party had to abandon Shanghai as its base from at least early July 1932, with the last members having left by early 1933.³⁹⁰

The attacks in the International Settlement in 1932 alone saw the Shanghai Municipal Police locate 103 buildings the Communists were using, and the prosecution of 233 persons for Communist offences.³⁹¹ Included in the arrests were Chen Duxiu, the first Secretary-General of the Chinese Communist Party who now led a breakaway Trotskyite Communist group, and 11 of his principal assistants. Chen Duxiu received 13 years imprisonment and 15 years deprivation of civil rights.³⁹² Another major success was the break-up of the Central Office of the Chinese Youth League on 18 November 1932, which resulted in the arrest of its head and eight other officials.³⁹³ This raid also netted

388 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 155 & p. 375, endnote 149,

389 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

390 . Sullivan, L.R. 'Reconstruction and Rectification of the Chinese Communist Party in the Shanghai Underground', *China Quarterly*, No 101, March 1985, pp. 95 & 96; *History of the Chinese Communist Party. A Chronology of Events (1919-1990)*, p. 84.

391 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1932*, p. 106.

392 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1933*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1934, p. 112.

393 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1932*, p. 106.; Wakeman, *op. cit.*, pp. 222 & 400, endnote 44.

over 1,500 documents including, importantly, ones about Communist activities in Shanghai, other cities and various parts of China.³⁹⁴ It was not until August 1933 that the Comintern had properly established itself in Shanghai and was able to start remitting funds to Communist movements in Southeast Asia.³⁹⁵

The state of the Chinese Communist Party reflected the attacks upon it in China and by the International Settlement police. In the International Settlement the successes continued into 1933, with 223 Communists prosecuted and 174 addresses discovered from which they operated. Communist literature seized was of 338 different kinds and totalled 71,607 pieces.³⁹⁶ The breaking up of the military committee of the CCP saw the arrest of nine Chinese and one Annamite, and the seizure of literature in English, French, Annamite, Japanese, Gurmukhi and Chinese.³⁹⁷

The Shanghai Municipal Police with the assistance of the Public Security Bureau continued their attacks on the Chinese Communist Party in the International Settlement where in 1933, 131 Communists were convicted and 91 handed over to the Guomindang, including five sentenced to death.³⁹⁸ During 1933 Communist operations in Shanghai centred on mainly propaganda and assassination of Guomindang security officials by the 'Dog Beating Corps' – as the CCP's Red Brigade was commonly called. Between November 1932 and September 1933, members of the Chinese Communist 'Dog Beating Corps' operating from within the Settlement conducted four assassinations of Guomindang officials there. Six were arrested along with a large quantity of

394 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1932*, p. 106.

395 . Yong, 1991, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

396 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1933*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1934, p. 111.

397 . *Ibid.*, pp. 111 & 112.

398 . *Ibid.*

ammunition and weapons, including 11 automatic pistols with five spare magazines and over 1,000 rounds of ammunition.³⁹⁹

The killings did not stop, however, as the CCP carried out ‘purification’ of the Party in 1934, and the killing of Guomindang agents in and around Shanghai.⁴⁰⁰ As noted, the Comintern had restarted its operations in Shanghai and police intelligence indicated it was much better organised for subversion.⁴⁰¹ Operations in 1934 by the Shanghai Municipal Police to suppress Communism, in cooperation with the Public Security Bureau, effectively destroyed the Chinese Communist Party in the International Settlement. The Shanghai Municipal Police prosecuted 149 Communists and discovered 142 addresses from where they operated. In conjunction with the raids, the SMP seized the outfits of three secret radio stations, and 27 pistols with over 1,000 rounds of ammunition.⁴⁰² In March 1934 Guomindang security services raided the Jiangsu Party Headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party, completely disrupting Communist activities in Shanghai and the surrounding countryside.⁴⁰³

The Guomindang had not shown any resistance to the Japanese encroachments on its territories. The policy of *Annei Rangwei* coupled with strategic withdrawal, trading land for time against the Japanese, saw Manchuria fall with little resistance. Chiang Kai-shek’s main forces had been used in combat against the Communist base areas and rebellions within the Guomindang. The policy of strategic withdrawal stood firm until Shanghai in early 1932.

399 . *Ibid.*, p. 111.

400 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1934*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1935, p. 70.

401 . CO273/616/50147, *Straits Settlements Police Special Branch Report for 1934*, dated 31 December 1934, p. 3.

402 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1934*, p. 79.

403 . Sullivan, *op. cit.* p. 96.

The Japanese Army in China was not that much better armed than the Chinese forces it faced, especially in regards to infantry weapons. The Japanese Army in 1925 had no machine guns at the battalion level and no light machine guns. They still advanced in line as they did in the Russo-Japanese war with close quarter combat, relying on the bayonet as the core tactic, with these tactical principles maintained right up to the Second World War.⁴⁰⁴ What it did have, however, was far better training, standardised weapons and artillery.

To make up for a lack of modern weapons the army relied on *seishen*. It came to mean more than ultimate sacrifice under desperate circumstances - it transcended the necessity for modern scientific weapons capability.⁴⁰⁵ Sakairai Todayoshi wrote a book, *Human Bullets*, which glorified the Japanese Army in terms of its soldiery and their *seishen* based on the Japanese Army's experiences in the Russo-Japanese War.⁴⁰⁶ *Seishen* saw the Army depend on 'expendable' men rather than expensive weapons. which was the direct opposite of the navy.⁴⁰⁷

The emphasis on *Seishen* led to the 1928 manual, *Basic Principles of the Imperial Army*, which placed particular emphasis on spirit or morale as superior to material in combat, in recognition of Japan's 'insufficient numbers of troops and scant resources'. The words *surrender*, *retreat* and *defence* were removed from the manual. This permeated through the army field manuals and training material and became an integral part of the school and youth material; later, it was part of the Army's general propaganda to the Japanese people.⁴⁰⁸

404. Humphreys, L.A. *The Imperial Japanese Army, 1918-1929: The Disintegration of the Meiji Military System*, PhD, Stanford University, pp. 184 & 185.

405. *Ibid*, pp. 217 & 218.

406. *Ibid*, p. 218.

407. *Ibid*, p. 219.

408. *Ibid*, p. 226.

After the 1925 reductions, the Army was authorised to activate a small experimental tank unit, two regiments of anti-aircraft artillery and the Taiwan Mountain Artillery Battalion. Heavy machine gun and motor transport units were expanded, the development of a light machine gun started and wireless communications equipment was improved. The two aircraft battalions were expanded into air regiments and became a separate branch of the army.⁴⁰⁹ Units that were destined in China were equipped with the new equipment first. When the Japanese forces were involved in Shanghai in 1932 they certainly employed armoured units and were seen with machine guns at below battalion level.

In the 1932 Battle for Shanghai, Japanese forces used the Type 89 tank, the French NC and the Type 88 tankette.⁴¹⁰ The latter were Carden-Loyd light machine gun carriers Mk IV, six being purchased by Japan in 1928, with two more Mk IVb models purchased later on.⁴¹¹ The French NC was not popular as the engine suffered from overheating, the power train was prone to malfunctions and the suspension easily damaged.⁴¹² The Type 88 was popular and robust and was also used in the 1937 Battle of Shanghai. The Type 89 was equipped with a short 57 mm gun and two 6.5 mm machine guns. Its armour was between 6 and 17 mm and weighed 9.8 tonnes. The vehicle was 4,300mm long, 2150 mm wide and 2,200 mm high.⁴¹³ The Type 88 was 2,464 mm long, 1994 mm wide and 1219 mm high and weighed 1.5 tonnes. It was equipped with one .303 in Vickers water cooled machine gun.⁴¹⁴

The 19th Route Army under Cai Tingkai was garrisoned in Shanghai as the anti-Japanese boycott and anti-Japanese sentiment were starting to affect Japanese businesses in

409 . *Ibid.*, p. 199.

410 . Hara, T. *Japanese Medium Tanks*, Profile Publications, Windsor, 1972; Roland, P.M. *Imperial Japanese Tanks*, Argus Books, Hertfordshire, 1975.

411 . Roland, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

412 . Hara, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

413 . Roland, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

414 . *Ibid.*, p. 23.

Shanghai. A series of incidents in late 1931 came to a head in early January 1932 when five Japanese priests were beaten up by a group of Chinese, secretly organised by Major Tanaka Ryūkichi of the Japanese Secret Services; it was done to draw foreign attention away from the setting up of the puppet state of Manchuko.⁴¹⁵ The Japanese used this to give the Guomindang a series of ultimatums. Eventually these were refused and the Chinese city of Zhabei in Shanghai became a war zone.⁴¹⁶ The 19th was composed of the 60th, 61st and 78th Divisions from Guangdong and the 87th and 88th Divisions from Jiangsu stiffened with Guangdong cadres.⁴¹⁷ Its title belied its strength as it had only 33,000 soldiers, the equivalent of three divisions.⁴¹⁸ They resisted the Japanese in Shanghai for 35 days and showed Chinese soldiers to be effective if well led and equipped. They withdrew, as they received few reinforcements from other Guomindang forces to replace casualties and ammunition.⁴¹⁹ After the armistice the 19th Route Army's soldiers were regarded as national heroes but were not popular with the Guomindang government in Nanjing. They were sent to Fujian as Chiang Kai-shek did not want them near any major cities and hoped that by being used in the anti-Communist role, they and the Communists would both be weakened. The city of Zhabei was handed back a smoking ruin.

The 19th Route Army, feeling aggrieved at their treatment and opposed to Chiang Kai-shek's policy regarding the Japanese, rebelled in November 1933 and set up a rival government in Fujian. The Army was essentially composed of soldiers from Guangdong Province who owed no loyalty to Chiang Kai-shek, especially in view of their treatment after the 1932 Battle for Shanghai. The rebellion was quickly crushed as agents of Dai Li, who was the head of the Guomindang's Secret Services, the Jutong, had undermined

415 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

416 . Shanghai was split into the International Settlement, French City and the Chinese City of Zhabei, which in reality was the city. The correct term by non-Chinese was the Chinese city of Zhabei.

417 . 'The Fighting at Shanghai', *Journal of the RUSI*, Vol. LXXVII, No. 506, May 1932, p. 393.

418 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

419 . 'The Fighting at Shanghai', *op. cit.*, p. 394.

two key commanders of the 19th Route Army through bribery. The Guomindang was given the 19th Route Army's codebooks, which meant they were able to read all of the 19th Route Army message traffic and plans. The bribery also enabled Guomindang forces to attack through Fuzhou unopposed in January 1934, which enabled the rebellion to be quickly crushed.⁴²⁰ The Chinese Communist Party and the Fujian rebels sent officers to the Jiangxi Soviet to see whether it was to join with the Red Army. The CCP's Central Committee decided after much debate in the negative, even though this would have meant relief for Communist forces in the Jiangxi-Fujian border area, who were cut off from the main force in the Jiangxi Soviet due to the Fifth Encirclement Campaign.⁴²¹

The Fifth Encirclement Campaign, the Loss of the Jiangxi Soviet, and the Road to Ya'nan

The Fifth Encirclement Campaign, which led to the famous Long March and Mao becoming the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, saw the Guomindang finally succeed in destroying the Jiangxi Soviet. Instead of a three-month campaign, the Guomindang's logistics were built up to wage siege warfare and a campaign of attrition with the new tactics negating the Red Army's strengths in manoeuvre.

Firstly, the Guomindang had modified their divisional structure and created the Anti-Communist Division. It reduced the number of headquarters units to simplify command and control and emphasised bringing all combat units up to full strength. Secondly, the advance was to be slow, deliberate and linear to avoid flank attacks, and was supported by blockhouses, which isolated the battlefield and secured the rear areas from attack.⁴²²

420 . Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

421 . 'Introduction' in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, pp. lxxx - lxxxiv.

422 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 161; Schram, 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 518; and Biao, Lin. 'On the Short, Swift Thrusts', in Chi-his Hu. 'Mao, Lin Biao and the Fifth Encirclement Campaign', *China Quarterly*, No. 82, Apr-Jun 1980, pp. 272 – 280.

As soon as the advance stopped blockhouses were built to secure the areas taken.⁴²³ This negated Mao's strategy of 'luring the enemy deep' into the Jiangxi Soviet, isolating them from supporting forces and then destroying them with a series of ambushes.

The problem of attacking fortified villages and blockhouses had been identified in 1931 as the Red Army sought to destroy fortified villages where the remnants of the local gentry lived. Zhu De and Mao ordered that the tactics employed by various units to destroy the blockhouses, and in now what is known as urban warfare, were to be collected and documented for use throughout the Red Army.⁴²⁴ Attacks on blockhouses were generally expensive in casualties or ineffective due to the Communist's lack of supporting weapons. Tunnelling was the preferred option in the countryside.⁴²⁵

As part of the Guomindang's new strategy, before the battle, lectures were conducted in Lushan for cadres from all the Guomindang divisions involved, where Chiang Kai-shek stressed that a counterinsurgency campaign was 70 percent political and 30 percent military. This is significant as it was seen as much more 'a hearts and minds' campaign. It was used to consolidate the areas that they had captured by winning over 'the masses' as the Red Army had done and was their primary role.⁴²⁶

The change in Guomindang tactics was aided by a change in strategy by the Returned Student Faction that now controlled the strategy of the Red Army. Instead of letting the enemy move deep into the Soviet and then attacking it when it was advantageous, the Red Army was forced to attack the Guomindang forces on its borders to take back cities and territories lost. Thus when the city of Lichuan was lost early in the campaign, the Red Army was bled white against the blockhouses, trying to retake it. Mao wrote that his

423 . *Ibid.*

424 . Mao Zedong. 'Order to Gather Experience About Attacking Fortified Village Blockhouses (14 October 1931)', in Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 158 & 159.

425 . *Ibid.*

426 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *loc. cit.*

strategy of strategic defence would have entailed the Red Army give battle in a place and time of its choosing, as in the year-long campaign there would have been opportunities.⁴²⁷

The Returned Student Faction was well aware of the problem as Otto Braun wrote: 'Strategically, we were on the defensive. Still, we could not permit ourselves to sink into positional war, but had to solve the double task of preserving our essential strength through tactical manoeuvres and attacks.'⁴²⁸

Mao further wrote that the Returned Student Faction could not identify the first battle from which the Red Army could launch a counterattack. Mao's strategy would have been doomed to failure as the Guomindang forces were stronger and offered no room to manoeuvre for flank or rear attacks. Mao failed to recognise that Guomindang's blockhouse strategy and its slow methodical attack negated the ability of the Red Army to isolate Guomindang units. Moreover, if attacked, or they suffered a reverse, they quickly retreated behind the blockhouses to regroup and await the inevitable Red Army attack. The Guomindang simply were not going to be 'lured deep' into the Jiangxi Soviet unsupported by flanking units and blockhouses.

Mao further accused the Returned Student Faction of lacking strategic leadership but it is difficult to see what they could do but to withdraw.⁴²⁹ The tactics of the Red Army in the Fifth Encirclement Campaign were to fight for every bit of territory and to counterattack on a wide front with 'short sharp thrusts', which was all they could do to obtain time, even if it meant receiving heavy casualties. Lin Biao's method to attack against these blockhouses was to launch a feint, make the Guomindang forces move out from them, and then have his forces launch a flank attack. Very difficult to coordinate, the Guomindang forces just retreated back to the blockhouses, leaving the Red Army

427 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 520.

428 . Braun, O. *A Comintern Agent in China 1932- 1939*, Queensland University Press, 1982, p. 67.

429 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 520.

units involved in the open. They were then attacked by Guomindang artillery and aircraft which decimated them, causing a steady loss of its strength.⁴³⁰ The Returned Student Faction rightly argued that any ground lost to the Guomindang forces was lost forever as it was quickly fortified, and the people behind the blockhouses were then suppressed – the ‘smashing of pots and pans’.⁴³¹

A spoiling offensive against Guomindang forces north of Guangchang in late April failed, mainly due to the flanking force arriving late and failing to engage the Guomindang forces, leaving the attacking force exposed in the open which wore the brunt of and was savaged by Guomindang artillery and aircraft. This failure which led to the loss of Guangchang convinced the central committee in the Jiangxi Soviet the Red Army and the central committee needed to withdraw from the Jiangxi Soviet.⁴³² Mao was vehemently opposed to any breakout and still believed that he could ‘lure the enemy in deep’ and stood by this belief in his writings after the Long March.⁴³³

The Long March actually consisted of five separate retreats from Guomindang encirclements, and the mythology surrounding the performance of the Red Army, the actions it faced and Mao’s performance and influence on it, started almost from its completion.

Preparations for the breakthrough started in May 1934. The objective was to give the Red Army an area where it could manoeuvre, and after linking up with the Second and Sixth Corps, create a new base area in the Hunan-Guizhou border area.⁴³⁴ Unknown at the time was that the Second Corps was also on the move due to Guomindang offensives.

430 . Ch-his Hu. ‘Mao, Lin Biao and the Fifth Encirclement Campaign’, *China Quarterly*, Jun 1980, pp. 272 – 280.

431 . Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, p. 505.

432 . Braun, *op.cit.*, p. 37.

433 . Mao Zedong. ‘Problems of strategy in China’s Revolutionary War’ (December 1936)’ in Schram, 1999, *op.cit.*, pp. 502 – 509.

434 . Braun, , *op.cit.*, p. 77.

Operational security was paramount and initially only the central committee and army commanders knew of the breakout. This was gradually relaxed with the junior troops being told just one week before the breakout. Mao criticised this as it led to ‘insufficient political training’ but the need to keep the operation secret and to forestall desertions was paramount.⁴³⁵ The future of the Chinese Communist Party depended on it. To conceal the Red Army’s massing for a withdrawal, the ‘short sharp thrusts’ were gradually taken over by local and guerrilla forces.

Besides hiding the Red Army’s intentions it battle hardened the local units which were tasked to stay behind after the Red Army left. Mao’s ideas were unsuitable. Preparations were essentially completed on 1 October 1934 and on 16 October the main force of the Red Army commenced its breakout from the Jiangxi Soviet and so began the Long March.⁴³⁶

The effect of overwhelming firepower on forces with little room to manoeuvre, as occurred during the Fifth Encirclement Campaign, were forgotten by the staff of the Chinese People’s Volunteers (CPV) in Korea. Lin Biao’s ‘Iron Divisions’ attacked the United States Marine Corps (USMC) First Marine Division in the Chosin Reservoir campaign in late 1950. The First Marine Division conducted a strategic withdrawal and USMC aircraft and US Navy aircraft were able to attack the CPV as they grouped to attack the Marines, covering the Marines’ withdrawal. After the Korean front stabilised in early 1951, the United Nations forces’ overwhelming superiority in firepower caused the CPV to be bled white as it battered itself against the United Nations front lines. There

435 . *Ibid.*, p. 87.

436 . *Ibid.*, p. 80.

were no flanks, again like the Fifth Encirclement Campaign, and thus there was no room to manoeuvre. Almost thirty years later during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict the PLA again employed the same tactics with the same predictable results. Their forces involved were hammered.

***The Arming and Organisation of the Red Army: 'The Kind of War to Fight Depends on What Kinds of Arms We Have'*⁴³⁷**

The organisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was never as structured as the plans laid down by Mao and Zhu. From its earliest days the arming of the Red Army was problematic at best, as it equipped itself with whatever weapons it could capture. Relying on captured weapons and ammunition, and given the chaotic state of the Guomindang's weapons procurement, and that many of the units were ex-warlord armies, meant that there was no standardisation in the Red Army's weapons and ammunition. Warlord armies were supplied from an assortment of local and overseas sources and there was little or no standardisation with the Nationalist Army.

The armies of the late Qing had settled on the 7.92 x 57 mm round for their rifles but there were still many different calibres in circulation. The Nationalists were no better as the Northern Expedition was equipped from a variety of sources including the Soviet Union, and the incorporation of warlord armies only compounded the problem of non-standard weapons and ammunition. Further hampering logistics, the 7.92 mm round was available in two different versions, one being too powerful to use in rifles chambered for the other. The Arsenal at Hanyang in 1928 and later Shanghai supplied new bolt-action rifles and the Shanghai Arsenal also supplied 82mm mortars.⁴³⁸ To be fair, the Chinese were not the only ones guilty of having many varied calibres. For example, the British

437 . Attributed to Zhu De.

438 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, pp. 107 & 134.

Army started the Second World War with four calibres for the small arms in the battalion and by the end of the war this had grown to eight; the German Army in the Second World War was worse – it used captured weapons on an immense scale.⁴³⁹ Appendix One shows the problem of the differing weapons types and ammunition in service made by the Guomindang Arsenal Administration Office in December 1934. This plethora of different weapon and ammunition types, which was compounded in 1945 with ex-United States and Japanese equipment, was to continue to plague Chinese Communist military forces up until the 1960s.⁴⁴⁰

The Red Army's main forces were as fully armed as possible, with the Red Guard and Pioneer units on a lesser scale, supplementing them with 'naked blades' (spears). The amount of weapons available depended on their success in battle. In 1928 the Red Army on paper had 75 rifles in the company. The Red Army was so successful in battle that in June 1931 it was noted that 'each company should carry at least 90 guns with it, even if it does not have enough people'.⁴⁴¹ Similarly success in battle saw another problem. The Red Army in 1931 and 1932 had a problem that has plagued armies before them and after, soldiers overloaded carrying too much ammunition. In 1932, Zhu De and Mao Zedong signed an order that said, 'It appears that the most valuable thing for an army in combat is swiftness'; and later on, 'Therefore, it is hereby stipulated that the number of bullets each fighter carries may not exceed 150 rounds at most'.⁴⁴² One bonus in the victories after the Fourth Encirclement Campaign was that each Red Army division was able to have four or five mortars.⁴⁴³

439. Gander, T. & Chamberlain, P. *Weapons of the Third Reich An Encyclopedic Survey of All Small Arms, Artillery and Special Weapons of the German Land Forces 1939-1945*, Doubleday and Company, New York, 1979, *passim*.

440. Smith, J.E. & Smith, W.H.B. *Small Arms of the World*, Stackpole, Harrisburg, 1973, pp. 293 – 299(b).

441. Zhu De & Mao Zedong. 'Order That Troops Must March with Light Packs, 5 September 1932, in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

442. 'Minutes of the First Eight Meetings of the General Front Committee of the First Front Army of the Red Army (May 25-June 10, 1931)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

443. Collier & Chin-Chih. *op. cit.*, p. 184.

Guerrilla detachments, the Red Guards and the Young Pioneers had a lesser scale of rifles, supplemented by spears that were laid down to be a uniform 1,575 mm long.⁴⁴⁴ A guerrilla detachment was to have three squads armed with rifles and two with spears. For model teams of the Red Guards and Young Pioneers each squad should be allocated three rifles for the squad heads and two group heads each, the other eight having spears.⁴⁴⁵ If spare rifles were available, two to four rifles per squad could be issued to give 35 to 47 rifles in each company instead of the stipulated minimum of 23 rifles.⁴⁴⁶

Successes in the 1933 Bandit Extermination Campaigns saw the Red Army grow to over 40,000 and better armed, especially in machine guns. Mortars were available but ammunition was not. Rifle and machine gun ammunition was manufactured from reloading used cartridge cases, small arms were being repaired in their own arsenal and hand grenades were manufactured. Radios and telephones were in good supply and from 1934 mortar bombs were also manufactured.⁴⁴⁷

Turning to its organisation, the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army in 1928 had the most modern infantry squad structure of its time, and from there, the structure had been adopted all over the world. This came about because the army was new and was imbued with a sense of being revolutionary in thought and behaviour. Mao had proposed a regimental structure that was based on the Guomindang's, which itself was based on the late Qing.⁴⁴⁸ It was to be composed of a headquarters, three infantry battalions and one

444 . Mao Zedong. 'A Secret Order on the Problem of Organizing Local Armed Forces (December 20, 1932)', in Schram, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

445 . *Ibid.*, pp. 341 & 342.

446 . *Ibid.*, p. 342.

447 . Braun , *op.cit.*, p. 37.

448 . Brunnert & Hagelstrom, *op.cit.*, p. 288.

machine gun, trench mortar and special task company each.⁴⁴⁹ He was overruled in May 1928 by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, with its Directive Number 51, titled 'the Question of Setting up the Red Army'. The directive recommended the use of available arms, including old-fashioned guns and swords and that the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army should apply the 'Taiping Heavenly Kingdom' organisation. The Taiping 'three-five' system was to be used: twelve men to a squad, three squads to a platoon, five platoons to a company, five companies to a regiment and five regiments to a division, each division to have 4,500 men.⁴⁵⁰ The small amount of weapons meant that only two companies in each regiment could have firearms. The Central Committee selected the Taiping system and spirit as it was suitable for guerrilla operations.⁴⁵¹ The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army composed its infantry squad into three four-man groups.

This was also based on the Taiping rebels' structure but the platoon structure differed in that the Tapings' had five groups of four men and five at the platoon headquarters.⁴⁵² The structure enabled the squad to be a small independent unit that could provide its own fire and manoeuvre. The People's Liberation Army following on from The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, has utilised this type of organisation in the infantry squad since 1928 and its use is ingrained in all its soldiers. Thus fire and movement is simplified, as each sub-group in any PLA organisation understands its role if called into combat.

Each infantry company was allowed to have 75 rifles (long-barrelled guns) and six handguns guns per company, and 40 rifles per machine gun and mortar companies.⁴⁵³

449 . Scrahm, S.R. *op.cit.*, p. 125.

450 . 'Jianli Hongjun wenti' in 'Zhongyang tonggaodi wu shiyihao jenshi gongzuo dagang' *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji* 1928, Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, Beijing, 1989, p. 233.

451 . *Ibid.*

452 . Jen, Y.W. *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1973, p. 45.

453 . Mao Zedong. 'Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth

Weapons captured during the Bandit Extermination Campaigns may have allowed some units of the Red Army to approach the equipment levels of the organisation charts.

In 1930, after Workers' and Peasants' Red Army had organised itself in the Jiangxi Soviet, the tactical unit was the corps. This would seem unusual as a corps is normally composed of two or three divisions and is too large as a tactical unit. Looking at the Red Army's organisation charts this appears true as a Red Army corps consisted of three infantry divisions with three regiments each. However the Red Army had conformed to the Chinese military trait of overstating the size of their units. A regiment was nominally composed of four infantry companies and a machine gun company when the availability of men and equipment permitted it. A company was composed of three platoons each of three squads of 10 men. Thus a regiment was actually battalion strength and a division at best a regiment with a corps having the strength of a division.⁴⁵⁴ Thus the Red Army was structured with too many headquarters units.

In May 1931 the Third Army under Mao Zedong and Zhu De was estimated by the Guomindang to number 14,000 men with 8,800 rifles, 157 machine guns, 10 cannon and 16 trench mortars. By January 1932, after the end of the Third Bandit Extermination Campaign, it was estimated by the Guomindang that the Red Army's First Group of Armies, comprising the Third, Fourth and 12th Armies, numbered 50,000 men with 50,000 rifles.⁴⁵⁵ Thus the Communist Armies in the Jiangxi Soviet were becoming stronger after each successive Bandit Extermination Campaign and after the third one had become a very strong force. By December 1932 a mortar company of 120 officers and other ranks with four to six mortars, 40 rifles and six pistols was added to the division. The mortars were obtained through the Guomindang's Bandit Extermination Campaigns.

Red Army (6 December 1928), in Scrahm, 1995, *op.cit.*, p. 125.

454 . Collier & Chin-Chih. *op. cit.*, p. 162.

455 . Koo, V.K.W. *Memoranda Presented to the Lytton Commission*, Chinese Cultural Society, New York, 1933, pp. 790 & 791.

Also added were a special service company of 95 officers and other ranks with 88 rifles and a communications platoon of 60 officers and other ranks.⁴⁵⁶

In 1933 the Comintern sent Otto Braun, who had just passed the Frunze Military Academy, to act as a military advisor.⁴⁵⁷ The Guomindang identified him as Chey and the Chinese Communists called him Li De (Li the German).⁴⁵⁸ He reorganised the Red Army in line with Soviet Union's divisional structure of the time. He recommended that the corps be abolished and that the reorganised division become the tactical unit. There were two other major changes recommended. The first was that a regiment was to consist of three rifle battalions and a machine gun company, and that the company structure, which had previously been subordinate to the regiment become subordinate to the battalion. The second was the platoon was to consist of three rifle squads and a light machine gun squad. Zhou Enlai, the vice-president of the Military Commission, ordered the changes on 1 October 1933 and at the same time each squad was ordered to select marksmen. There was also added a reconnaissance team of 40 men at divisional level, 18 to each regiment and six to each battalion. The division was to be composed of three rifle regiments, a mortar detachment of between two and six mortars, a reconnaissance company, an intelligence company and a guard (staff) company.⁴⁵⁹

The significant organisational change to the 1937 Chinese infantry division was the introduction into the section/squad of two groups each of four men. One was the light machine gun group, the other the rifle group.⁴⁶⁰ This was done on the recommendation of the German military advisors. The machine gun group was equipped with one ZB26 light machine gun with the other members equipped with Mauser *Schnellfeuer* machine

456 . *Ibid.*

457 . Schram, *op. cit.*, fn.87, p. lxxvii.

458 . *Ibid.*; Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 162;

459 . Braun, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

460 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

pistols.⁴⁶¹ The rifle group had four 7.92 mm bolt action rifles. The Mauser C-96 'Broomhandle' automatic pistol and its Spanish copies were generally accepted as the standard sidearm of the Guomindang.⁴⁶² This was the same structure as the German assault or 'storm' troops in the First World War who had by 1918 evolved its section into a *stoss grupp* comprising a light machine gun squad (*lechte maschinengewehrtrupp*) with five soldiers and an assault squad (*stoss trupp*) of seven riflemen.⁴⁶³ This occurred just as the rest of the world's militaries were going to three light machine guns per platoon, so they were still going to be behind the rest of the world, especially when compared with the Japanese and the Chinese Communists. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, now designated the Eighth Route Army, was still using the Taiping squad structure.

The splitting of the squad into two equal groups, or teams, was seen as a tactical innovation by Captain Evans Carlson who was a United States Marine Corps officer visiting Yan'an in 1938.⁴⁶⁴ However, the use of fire teams by the Eighth Route Army was not the first time fire teams had been used in modern warfare, or in China.⁴⁶⁵ In

461 . It has been estimated that over 400,000 Mauser C-96 'broomhandle' pistols equipped with its wooden holster were sold to the Guomindang and various warlords in the 1920s and 1930s. It is also known that approximately 70,000 *Schnellfeuere* (the fully automatic machine pistol version) and about 40,000 Spanish machine pistols were shipped to China. Nelson T.B. & Musgrave, D.D. *The World's Machine Pistols and Submachine Guns, Volume II 1964-1980*, Arms and Armour Press, Melbourne, 1980, pp. 120 & 125.

462 . *Ibid.*, p. 121.

463 . English, J.A. *A Perspective on Infantry*, Praeger, New York, 1981, pp. 24 & 25; English, J.A. & Gudmundsson, B.I. *On Infantry*, Praeger, Westport, 1994, pp. 42 & 43.

464 . Carlson, E.F. *The Chinese Army. Its Organization and Military Efficiency*, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1940, pp. 27 & 28. Carlson's visit and its consequences will be elaborated later in this thesis.

465 . On the Eastern Front in the First World War, the German Army had a light machine gun platoon (*leichte M.G. truppe*) using the Bergmann LMG 15 light machine gun. Called a section by the German Army it was organised in three sub-sections, each with a section commander commanding three detachments of four men with a light machine gun and three rifles. The Western Front had its own version in the form of *Musketen* Battalions. Only three battalions were formed first appearing in the Battle for Champagne in September 1915. Two of these were later used against the British in the Battle of the Somme in 1916. They were not a success and were employed as a 'fire brigade', to defend threatened areas after a breakthrough by the Allies. The battalion consisted of three companies each with 30 Madsen light machine guns, referred to as automatic rifles, each four man squad being formed around one Madsen equipped with a 25 round magazine. The German infantry sections that attacked the Russians in June 1941 were initially organised around a five-man rifle group and four-man machine gun group with one MG-34

1937 and 1938, General W. M. Greene when a captain with the Fourth Marine Regiment in the International Settlement in Shanghai, developed and organised his Marine rifle company for riot control.⁴⁶⁶ It was based around ‘four man fighting teams’, with each team imbued with the ‘Follow Me’ spirit which was similar in concept to Carlson’s *Gung Ho* philosophy.⁴⁶⁷ Carlson had discussions with Greene about his experiences with the Eighth Route Army, and Greene’s use of four-man teams, whilst transiting in Shanghai during his return to the United States.⁴⁶⁸

It was a change of strategy rather than a lack of materiel that was the major reason for the Communist’s withdrawal from the Jiangxi Soviet. The losses of the Red Army after the Long March and the One Hundred Regiments Campaign would not have allowed this structure to be equipped until after the end of the Second World War when ex-Japanese and captured Nationalist weapons were available on a large scale.

The structure of the Red Army infantry battalion did not change greatly until the early losses in the Korean War. The way it operated did however. Although overwhelmingly an infantry force, from 1946 to 1949 guerrilla warfare tactics became less important as battles were fought against regular Guomindang forces. As more weapons were captured from the Guomindang, sub-machine guns and light machine guns became available to the

general-purpose machine gun. A second MG-34 was often acquired so that the section consisted of one NCO, three riflemen, two grenadiers and two machine gun teams of two men each. Thus two fire teams, based around a machine gun, could be formed as required. This unofficial organisation was from the same period that United States Marine Corps was forming its Raiders battalions. *German Army Handbook April 1918*, Arms & Armour Pres, London, 1977, pp. 59 & 60; Gander, T. & Chamberlain, P. *Weapons of the Third Reich. An Encyclopedic Survey of All Small Arms, Artillery and Special Weapons of the German Land Forces 1939-1945*, Doubleday and Company, New York, 1979, pp. 80 & 84; Greene, W.M. ‘Fire Team – Comrades in Battle’, *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 68, No. 12, December 1984, p. 64; English, J.A. *On Infantry*, Praeger, New York, 1984, p. 71.

466 . Greene, W.M. ‘The Employment of the Marine Rifle Company in Street Riot Operations’, *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 24, No. 1, March 1940, p. 50.

467 . *Ibid.*, p. 62.

468 . Greene, *loc. cit.*

platoon commander and light mortars to the company commander.⁴⁶⁹ The existing structure could absorb these new weapon types but at the battalion level medium mortar and machine gun platoons were added.

Tactics - The Hand Grenade and the Bayonet

Guerrilla warfare was the type of fighting that the Red Army practised and with which it was successful. Mao wrote in April 1929 that his guerrilla tactics were derived from ‘the struggle of the past three years’ and claimed they were unique, the Red Army’s, and not copied from any previous doctrine.⁴⁷⁰ This is interesting as there was no Red Army until August 1927. Mao had thus been formulating his strategy of using the masses (peasants) in the countryside for a rural-based revolution from at least 1926. Given that China was essentially a rural based economy this made sense, but contradicted the Marxist-Leninist advocacy of a city-based revolution.

The basic rules for combat for the Red Army that Mao developed in conjunction with Zhu De were:

- a. divide our forces to arouse the masses, concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy;
- b. the enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue;⁴⁷¹
- c. to extend stable base areas, employ the policy advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around; and
- d. arouse the largest numbers of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods.⁴⁷²

469 . An excellent photograph of a light machine gun platoon is on page 44 of Jowett, P. *Chinese Civil War Armies 1911-49*, Osprey, London, 1997.

470 . Schramm, 1995, *op. cit.*, p.155

471 . This was known as the sixteen character formula as in Chinese it is four lines with four characters each. *Ibid.*

The Red Army fought in mountains from its inception and emphasised close combat from which evolved Mao's 'man over machine' philosophy and the concept of 'People's War'. This emphasis on training and morale over materiel continued until recently. Training of the Red Army in the early days of the Jiangxi Soviet was simple and emphasised three areas: capturing hilltops, rifle marksmanship and throwing hand grenades. After the Third Extermination Campaign bayonet drill was added.⁴⁷³ In the war with Japan, 1937 to 1945, and the civil war from 1946 to 1949, the four areas of training emphasised were shooting, bayonet drill, throwing grenades, and employing mines and booby traps.⁴⁷⁴ Hand grenades became the primary weapon of the Red Army who used covering fire to get close enough to use hand grenades.

China became involved in the Korean War (1950 – 1953) with the People's Liberation Army being known as the 'Chinese People's Volunteers' (CPV) who came to the aid of the North Korean Army against United Nations Forces as they approached the Chinese border. In the early days of the Korean War, the tactics of the CPV in quietly moving up to and infiltrating United Nations positions, then using automatic fire from sub-machine guns positions to provide cover whilst throwing hand grenades, was generally successful. That was until they met the United States Marine Corps.⁴⁷⁵

The history of the Jiangxi Soviet revealed the ultimate folly of guerrilla forces which decide to employ conventional, as opposed to guerrilla, tactics against larger government forces; they invariably lose as the government forces can bring all their firepower to bear.

472 . *Ibid.*, pp. 155 & 156.

473 . Cheng, C.J. (ed). *The Politics of the Chinese Red Army: A Translation of the Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army*, Hoover Institution of War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford, 1966, p. 265.

474. *Ibid.*

475 . Koperts, K. 'The Origins of the Fire Team: Excerpts From An Interview With Homer L. Litzenberg, 27-30 April 1951', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol. 84, No. 12, p. 44; Thomas, R.C.W. 'The Chinese Communist Forces in Korea, *Army Quarterly*, October 1952, pp. 37 & 39 .

Mao's operational art based on strategic defence and 'luring the enemy in deep' depended on manoeuvre and strategic depth, and the attacking forces complying by letting themselves be drawn into a series of ambushes in terrain favourable to Red Army. The policy of counterattacking by primarily guerrilla and lightly armed forces, as occurred in the Fifth Encirclement Campaign, resulted in the Red Army bleeding itself white in the face of the firepower that the Guomindang could bring to bear. The Communist forces' attacks were blunted and stopped by the blockhouses. This was the classic 'hammer and anvil' approach to defence and counterattacks.

The next chapter examines how the lessons of the Jiangxi Soviet were put into practice after the completion at the Long March. These lessons were seemingly ignored in the disastrous Hundred Regiments Campaign against the Japanese and their retaliation which wreaked immense damage on the Chinese Communist Party and the Red Army. Yet they rebuilt themselves and when the Red Army was renamed the People's Liberation Army in 1946, both it and the Party were ready to challenge the Guomindang for the control of China. In just a little over three years of civil war, the Chinese Communist Party became the new the government of China.

Chapter Three

The Operational Art Formalised and Tested, 1935 - 1949

The success of the Fifth Encirclement Campaign and the subsequent Long March by the Red Army and the Central Committee of the CCP meant that the Party members in the cities were isolated and tried to continue the struggle, but were under constant attack. Six branch headquarters were located in the International Settlement during 1935. The raids yielded 91 identified Communists, of whom 69 were transferred to the Guomindang.⁴⁷⁶ Only 18 Communists were arrested in the International Settlement in 1936, so successful had been the joint SMP-PSB operations in 1935.⁴⁷⁷

The formation of the 'Second United Front' meant it was no longer a crime to be a communist in China, and Communist Party members in Shanghai and elsewhere surfaced again. In Shanghai their freedom of action was cut short by the Japanese occupation of Shanghai after bitter fighting at the start of the Sino-Japanese War. No longer regarded as bandits, they could now openly seek safety inside the International Settlement.

On 7 July 1937 Japanese and Chinese forces clashed at the Marco Polo Bridge precipitating China's War of Resistance, and on 13 August the Japanese launched their attack on Shanghai.⁴⁷⁸ By 11 November 1937 the Chinese had withdrawn from the environs of Shanghai, except for one battalion which was cut off and was interned in the International Settlement.⁴⁷⁹ The 1937 and 1938 Annual Police Reports of the Shanghai

476 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1935*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1936, p. 107.

477 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council, 1936*, Shanghai Municipal Council, Shanghai, 1937, p. 87.

478 . Calvert, M. 'Shanghai 1937', *War Monthly*, Issue 44, 1977, p. 10.

479 . *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Municipal Police mention communism only once: a raid on a bookstore.⁴⁸⁰ Given the three-month Japanese assault on Shanghai in 1937, and its subsequent capture, this is not at all surprising.

The Guomindang Secret Service now took over assassination of Chinese who were aiding the Japanese, using the safety of the International Settlement as the base of operations. They were an unwelcome presence; the 1938 Annual Police Report noted that ‘14 Chinese males were assassinated for political reasons’. To this figure must be added Chief Detective Superintendent Lu Liankui who had been responsible for the running of the Chinese defectives in the Shanghai Municipal Police. He was sitting in his car outside the Canton Hotel, when on 18 August 1938, three armed men appeared, shot him and made their escape. Most likely he was killed by the Guomindang Secret Police as he had been secretly working as a Japanese agent, although ‘unconfirmed Chinese reports’ declared that experts at the SMP’s Ballistics Department identified the bullet as having come from ‘one of the 27 pistols sold to the Japanese Special Services Section not long ago’.⁴⁸¹

The Long March and the 1937 Battle of Shanghai

A force under Fang Zhimin first broke through in June 1934 followed by a force under Fe Ke Yu in August 1934. These were diversionary attacks to allow the Red Army and the leaders of the CCP to escape and on 16 October 1934 this force, led by Bo Gu and Otto Braun broke through near Yudu. The end is taken as 10 October 1936 when what was left of the Second Army arrived in Yan’an in Shaanxi Province to join the remnants of the First and Fourth Armies.⁴⁸²

480 . *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council*, 1937, p. 107. *Annual Report of the Shanghai Municipal Council*, 1938, p. 117.

481. Wakeman, *op. cit.*, p. 419, fn 74; ‘Chinese Police Officer given Lavish Funeral’, *China Weekly Review*, Volume 85, Number 13, 27 August 1938, p. 432.

482 . Sun, *op.cit*, p. 213.

Mao wrote that initially the Long March looked like a panic driven flight, yet it in reality it was a military force withdrawing from an untenable area to a more secure one. According to Otto Braun the entire force comprised 75,000 to 85,000 men with 57,000 to 61,000 combat troops with 41,000 to 42,000 rifles and more than 1,000 light and heavy machine guns. Each soldier carried two weeks worth of rice and salt, and had two hand grenades. Each rifle had 70 to 100 cartridges, each light machine gun 300 to 400 cartridges with 500 to 600 cartridges accompanying each heavy machine gun.⁴⁸³ There were ample radios and field telephones as well.

The two assault groups designated with forcing the breakthrough initially comprised: (a) the First Corps made up of the First, Second, Third and 15th Divisions which comprised 16,000 to 18,000 men of which 14,000 to 15,000 were combat troops with 9,000 to 10,000 rifles and 300 to 350 machine guns; and (b) the Third Corps which consisted of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Divisions with 15,000 men of whom 12,000 to 13,000 were combat troops with 9,000 rifles and approximately 300 machine guns. To aid in the breakthrough each corps was given two field guns each with several hundred rounds of ammunition and between them they shared 30 to 40 light mortars with around 3,000 rounds that had been produced in the Jiangxi Soviet.⁴⁸⁴ The baggage train, which was the largest division at the start of the march, was immense and included all the civilian porters, the arsenal, leaflets and silver bullion.⁴⁸⁵ Due to its size, the baggage train was cumbersome and would slow down the march, regardless of any interference from the Guomindang.

The Zunyi Conference of 15 – 17 January 1935 is generally taken to be the occasion Mao gained control of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, yet was one of many and did not figure in the move to Ya'nan in Shaanxi Province. Zunyi, in Guizhou Province, was to be the next base area but 200,000 Guomindang troops approached so the

483 . Braun, *op.cit.*, pp. 81 & 82.

484 . *Ibid.*, p. 81.

485 . *Ibid.*, p. 83.

First Army, now under Mao, headed towards Sichuan from where many of Mao's senior commanders hailed and the Fourth Army had a secure base area.⁴⁸⁶ After a series of zigzag manoeuvres including crossing the Qi River four times, to shake Guomindang pursuers, he finally reached Sichuan with an emaciated and worn out force and where the Fourth Army had a secure base. The First Army had escaped the pursuing Guomindang again but even Lin Biao attacked Mao over his time in Guizhou Province. This was Mao at his tactically best but strategic worst as it nearly wore out the First Army. He kept looking for a place to build a base area, which was an unfeasible mission because of the poor economy and resource base of the provinces.⁴⁸⁷

Mao's forces were far weaker so after three months he split and moved his First Army to Yan'an to maintain his independence, fearing the Fourth Army would subsume his force. One of Mao's myths was that Zhang Guotao was trying to take control of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party yet Sun Shuyun showed that the alleged message Mao used to justify the split never existed.⁴⁸⁸ Jia Tuofu, a Shaanxi Communist from the area who was with Mao's force, told Mao of Yan'an.⁴⁸⁹ Liu Zhidan was purged along with many of his followers in the months leading up to Mao's arrival, and who Mao had come to 'rescue'. Mao's force arrived on 19 October 1935 after having crossed the Tibetan lowlands and 'the grasslands' which were the hardest trek of the Long March by Mao's forces.⁴⁹⁰ Six months later Liu was dead, killed by an 'accidental' gunshot to the chest.⁴⁹¹ Whether it was a genuine accident cannot be verified but the famous song *The East is Red* was originally a Shaanxi folk song about Liu Zhidan with Mao's name

486 . *Ibid.*, pp. 122 & 123.

487 . *Ibid.*, p. 129.

488 . Sun, *op. cit.*, pp. 171- 178.

489 . *Ibid.*, p. 205.

490 . *Ibid.*, p.180-195 & 202. Sun spoke to survivors of the Long March who described their time in the 'green desert' with horror.

491 . *Ibid*

being substituted after Liu's untimely death.⁴⁹² With the Red Army safely ensconced in Yan'an, myths about the Long March were quickly perpetuated by Mao Zedong, unwittingly aided by Edgar Snow, and continued by Chinese Communist Party propaganda ever since.⁴⁹³

On 13 August 1937 Japanese landing forces, supported by 27 navy ships including aircraft carriers, attacked Chinese positions in Zhabei. Chiang Kai-shek sent in his best forces to battle the Japanese and held them at bay for over two months in increasingly bitter urban warfare. The Japanese were saved from destruction by naval gunfire support and airpower. In November there were 250,000 Japanese and 500,000 Guomintang troops crowded into Zhabei and most Chinese casualties were caused by Japanese artillery which included 355mm siege guns.⁴⁹⁴ On 25 October, Japanese forces north of Shanghai at Woosung, finally broke out of their beachhead where they had been fighting since landing there on 22 August.⁴⁹⁵ On 7 November Japanese forces supported by carrier borne aircraft and a naval bombardment made an amphibious landing at Zhapu in Hangzhou Bay, south of Shanghai. Coupled with the Japanese forces advancing from Woosung, they threatened to envelope the Guomintang forces who had been weakened in the fighting. They retreated from Shanghai before the Japanese forces closed around them and blocked any means of escape.⁴⁹⁶

492 . *Ibid.*, p. 211.

493 . *Ibid.*, pp. 213 & 214, 222 – 226. Edgar Snow was an American reporter, who with his wife, Helen Foster Snow, lived in China in the 1930s and were sympathetic to the Chinese Communist Party. Snow visited Yan'an in 1936 and wrote a popular book of his visit titled *Red Star Over China*. A romantic figure, he has been both lauded for his work, and criticized as a 'communist stooge'. See Thomas, S.B. *Season of High Adventure: Edgar Snow in China*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996 and Mirsky, J. 'Getting the Story in China: American Reporters Since 1972', *Harvard Asian Quarterly*, Volume VI, Number 1, Winter 2002.

494 . Rodney Smith, C. 'Military Lessons from the Chinese-Japanese War', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Volume 24, Number 1, p.31.

495 . Rothwell, R.B. 'Shanghai Emergency', *Marine Corps Gazette*, Volume 56, Number 11, November 1972, pp. 51 & 52.

496 . *Ibid.*, p. 52; Rodney-Smith, *loc. cit.*

Japanese brutality towards people under its occupation occurred long before the Sino-Japanese War. Humphreys noted that the occupation of Siberia in the immediate post First World War period affected the morale and discipline of the Japanese Army, whose reputation was one of indifference in dealing with impoverished Russians and desperate Korean expatriates in Siberia, and the Chinese and Koreans in Manchuria.⁴⁹⁷ The Japanese proxies such as Semenov, Ivanov-Rinov and Kalmykov were worse in their callous and inhumane treatment, with Humphreys remarking that they ‘set a standard of terrorism and brutality which Japanese units may have tried to emulate’.⁴⁹⁸

A 1940 *Marine Corps Gazette* article on the Sino-Japanese War showed that the Japanese Army’s brutality in Nanjing cost the Japanese any chance to destroy the remnants of the main Guomindang Army.⁴⁹⁹ The Guomindang’s best forces slipped out of Shanghai and although the retreat turned into a rout the Guomindang survived to fight another day.⁵⁰⁰ Similarly, whilst the Japanese soldiers were brutalising the population of Nanjing, the remaining Guomindang forces slipped away to regroup, turning its rout into a semi-organised withdrawal enabling the army to escape.⁵⁰¹ The 88th Division stopped the initial attack on Nanjing, acting as a blocking force and then slipped away. Nanjing was subsequently defended by only poorly armed provincial troops. Cooper-Smith wrote frankly of the Japanese atrocities:

The city fell on December 13 and was given over to the invading army. Wild scenes of panic and disorder prevailed. Thousands of Chinese troops in the city were trapped and slain. Weeks elapsed before order was restored.

497 . Humphreys, L.A. *The Imperial Japanese Army, 1918-1929: The Disintegration of the Meij Military System*, PhD, Stanford University, pp. 71 & 72.

498 . *Ibid.*

499 . Rodney-Smith, *loc. cit*

500 . *Ibid.*, p. 32.

501 . *Ibid.*, p. 32

Meanwhile there was no pretence of pursuit of the beaten and disrupted Chinese forces.⁵⁰²

Further on he wrote:

Brutal treatment of civilians by soldiers, widespread aerial bombing of cities, and the sack of Nanking served to create a deep and lasting hatred of the invader and stiffened the Chinese national spirit and resistance as no peacetime propaganda could have done.⁵⁰³

This enmity continues to this day. The Japanese attack on China became a grand strategic disaster for the Japanese as its forces were now tied up fighting the Guomindang forces, instead of prosecuting the initial land attacks in the Pacific campaign more widely and, later on, stiffening island defences against the Allied counter-offensives.

502 . *Ibid.*

503 . *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Tactics and Structures Formalised and Tested: Yan'an, and Operations against the Japanese, 1937 - 1945

The Red Army arrived at Yan'an in Shaanxi Province on 19 October 1935 and was an organisation that through the crucible of the Long March had become a tight homogenous group. Mao set about absorbing and formalising the lessons of the Jiangxi Soviet with the establishment of the Red Army Academy. Here Mao was able to espouse his vision of fighting the war to liberate China first from the Japanese, and then from the Guomindang to create a communist state.

Although militarily weak, the cadres that had survived the Long March were battle hardened and ideologically sound, and set about militarising the villages outside of Yan'an, as they had in the Jiangxi Soviet. This gave the Eighth Route Army strategic depth for defence, ready logistic support to provide 'eyes and ears' and local guides to facilitate quick movement. Other duties included rear area security, litter bearers for the wounded and personnel to collect enemy equipment after the battle; and if the battle went badly to harass a pursuing enemy to facilitate the Eighth Route Army's or main force's escape.

After the Sino-Japanese War started, cadres espousing the call, 'Resistance for National Salvation', established contact with Chinese forces, which either had dispersed due to Japanese victories, or were now behind the Japanese lines. They were so successful that by December 1937, there were 18 border governments behind the Japanese lines and the Zhinzhaji border area was declared a new army zone which later was recognised by the government in Chongqing.⁵⁰⁴ The neutral zone was seen by the Communists as an area where the peasants had not been sufficiently educated and organised to defeat the Japanese. As the Communists grew in strength and trained cadres became available, they

504 . Li, L. *The Japanese Army in North China, 1937-1941*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1970, p. 197 & 198.

sent them to the neutral zone to sway to their aims the peasants and resistance fighters loyal to the Guomindang.

As soon as he was able, Mao set about formalising the tactics and strategy for the Red Army and future communist armies to follow. The Red Army University was formed to teach the lessons that had been learned and to train a new generation of cadres. Mao Zedong wrote a small textbook titled, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*; it was issued as a mimeograph until a printed version was produced in 1941.⁵⁰⁵ It was Mao's operational art and was the basis of all his military actions. Written prior to the Xi'an Incident of 12 December 1936, it referred to the Guomindang as the enemy. The classing of the Guomindang as the enemy was against Stalin's wishes, as through Wang Ming he had been directing the Chinese Communists to join with the Guomindang since late July 1936 in line with the united front strategy adopted at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern.⁵⁰⁶

In terms of the empirical basis for Mao's concepts of war, the Battle of Pingxingguan⁵⁰⁷ is used by the PLA to validate theory and is regarded as a major action by the PLA in the Sino-Japanese War. It would never have been a major action, nor taken place the way it did, but for Japanese complacency. The ambush of the 21st Brigade of the Fifth Division occurred because it failed to organise a screening force when knowingly entering a large ravine. The brigade was composed of over 100 trucks and 200 carts.

Under the command of Lin Biao, the Eighth Route Army units involved were the 115th Division composed of the 343rd and 344th Brigades supplemented by cavalry and an independent regiment. The 343rd Brigade was used to launch the ambush with the 344th

505 . Mao Zedong. 'Problems of strategy in China's Revolutionary War' (December 1936)' in Schram, 1999, *op. cit.*, pp. 465 – 538. The author refers to reader for the full text in this work.

506 . Dallin, A. & Firsov, F.I.(eds.) *Dimitrov and Stalin 1934 – 1943 Letters From the Soviet Archives*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2000, pp. 100 - 107.

507 . Unless stated otherwise the Battle of Pingxingguan is taken from Liu, Sydney. 'The Battle of Pinghsingkuan', *The China Mainland Review*, Volume II, Number 3, December 1966, pp. 161 – 173. This gives a full account of the battle using Mao's concepts of warfare.

and the supplementary forces were used to attack and block reinforcements. Lin Biao ensured that all possible contingencies were planned for. After a forced march, his forces only had two hours to deploy and these were the best forces that the Red Army had, including the 'Heroic First Red Company' and the 'Iron and Steel Second Red Company'.

The Chinese forces were poorly equipped with one company in the 686th Regiment of the 344th Brigade only having 100 rifles with 30 rounds and two hand grenades per man. Some men of the regiment used home-made rifles and others were armed only with sabres. Men in the 685th Regiment had extra hand grenades as they acted as the blocking force against Japanese reinforcements. There were some light and heavy machine guns and some mortars at the divisional level but ammunition was low. Samuel Griffith II, when he was a United States Marine Corps officer attached to the Japanese forces in China, had the chance to talk to captured Eighth Route Army soldiers. In late 1937 he noted the individual soldier would carry a bolt-action rifle with 30 rounds of ammunition and three hand grenades.⁵⁰⁸ He also carried a tea and salt ration and a two-kilogram pack of millet flour, supplementing this with food from the peasants he lived amongst.⁵⁰⁹

As it was an enemy held area, the intelligence available to the 343rd Brigade was poor and they only entrenched on one side of the road, meaning they could not trap the Japanese forces in a cross-fire. This was criticised yet they only had two hours to deploy and if overwhelmed by other Japanese units had to be able to retreat quickly. Primarily a guerrilla force, it would be overwhelmed rapidly by conventional manoeuvre forces and air power, so an effective escape route was required. The attack commenced at 0700 on 25 September 1937 with the Red Army units attacking in small groups and using hand-to-hand combat. This was 'hugging the enemy' so the enemy's heavier weapons were not able to be employed. Later on, a small Japanese force went onto Laoyehmiao Hill to attack the Chinese forces and relieve the Japanese forces. Lin Biao sent a unit across the

508 . Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

509 . Griffith, *loc. cit.*

road to blunt this Japanese counterattack and another Chinese regiment came up the Japanese rear trapping the remnants of the Japanese in a cross-fire.

The blocking forces routed Japanese reinforcements who lost about 400 men. This finished the battle, as the Japanese units in the ravine who had not fought their way out were dead. From there Lin Biao's forces went to the base of Tungpaochih to aid Guomindang forces who had surrounded a Japanese force. They had to retreat the next day as they started to take considerable casualties from the better equipped and trained Japanese ground forces and air strikes. This battle was a little one in the grand scheme of battles in China but it was the first time a Red Army force had taken on the Japanese on its own terms and won. It inflicted a severe defeat on the Japanese unit involved and the Red Army captured much needed arms and equipment.

In 1937 and 1938, Captain Evans Carlson of the United States Marine Corps, at the behest of President Roosevelt, spent six months marching over 3,200 kilometres with the Communist Eighth Route Army in Shaanxi.⁵¹⁰ Carlson had previously spent two tours in China, first under General Smedley Butler in Shanghai in 1927-1929 and in 1933-1935 when studying the Chinese language in Shanghai and Beijing.⁵¹¹ He resigned his commission in 1938 after being censored by the US Navy over his comments about the Eighth Route Army. When he went back to the United States he tried to persuade the public that if the United States stopped selling war materiel to Japan, China could win its war against them.⁵¹² Based on his experiences in Yan'an, Carlson also espoused his vision of *Gung Ho* (work together) when making a military unit to give it morale and martial spirit.⁵¹³ In early 1942 the United States Marine Corps raised two raider battalions, a special mission force based on the success of the British Commandos and

510 . English, J.A. *On Infantry*, Praeger, New York, 1981, p. 164; Tuchman, B.W. *Stillwell and the American Experience in China 1911 - 45*, Bantam, New York, 1971, p. 184; Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

511 . Tuchman, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

512 . *Ibid.*, p. 189.

513 . Foster Snow, H. *My China Years*, Harap, London, 1984, p. 322.

the Chinese guerrillas operating in Northern China. Evans Carlson, now a Lieutenant Colonel, became commanding officer of the Second United States Marine Corps Raider battalion, basing the organisation of the battalion on the Eighth Route Army's.⁵¹⁴

The Xi'an Incident saved the Red Army from continued attacks. Zhang Xueliang, the son of the late Manchurian warlord Zhang Zuolin, and Yang Hucheng arrested Chiang Kai-shek to force him to join forces with the Chinese Communists. After the arrest there was much political manoeuvring. For example, it was Zhang's and Yang's own forces that were supposed to be attacking the Chinese Communists in Shaanxi, and Stalin telling Mao not to have Chiang Kai-shek killed and instead join with him. Mao and Zhou Enlai most unwillingly accepted this was in the Chinese Communists' best interests (it was actually in the USSR's best interest) not to have Chiang killed and instead join him in an anti-Japanese pact.⁵¹⁵ Chiang was forced to agree to stop attacking the Chinese Communists, and form a second 'United Front', this time against the Japanese on 24 December 1936.

Zhang Guotao's force was cut off and decimated by Guomindang forces in March 1937, against the rules of the 'United Front', but as he was a major rival to Mao there was no complaint from either Zhou Enlai or Mao. Even Stalin was averse to assisting them and suggested that although the USSR could provide instructors and support, Sheng Shicai, the Soviet-sponsored warlord of Xinjiang, should also offer partial support.⁵¹⁶ They later moved to Yan'an with Zhang in disgrace, and he went over to the Guomindang in 1938.

The Operational Art 1938-1945

514 . Griffith, S.B. *op. cit.*, fn 28, p. 336.

515 . *Ibid.*, pp. 107 – 109.

516 . *Ibid.*, pp. 109 & 110.

Mao Zedong's book, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*⁵¹⁷, comprises five chapters:

Chapter One	How to Study War;
Chapter Two	The Chinese Communist Party and China's Revolutionary War;
Chapter Three	The Characteristics of China's Revolutionary War;
Chapter Four	'Encirclement and Suppression' and Counter-Campaign against 'Encirclement and Suppression' — The Main Form of China's Revolutionary War; and
Chapter Five	The Strategic Defensive.

The latter three chapters especially defined Mao's theories of war but this thesis will concentrate on Chapter Five as it encapsulates his operational art. In Chapter Five, Mao explained nine problems. These were:

1. active defence and passive defence;
2. preparations for countering 'encirclement and suppression';
3. strategic retreat;
4. strategic counteroffensive;
5. the problem of starting a counteroffensive;
6. the problem of concentrating troops;
7. mobile warfare;
8. wars of quick decision; and
9. wars of annihilation.⁵¹⁸

Guerrilla warfare was viewed with distain by senior communist commanders. Ho Lung, the officer most drawn to a peasant army, derived great pleasure from incorporating a guerrilla unit into the main force where he could subject it to 'training, march discipline

517 . Mao Zedong. 'Problems of strategy in China's Revolutionary War' (December 1936)' in Schram, 1999, *op. cit.*, pp. 465 – 538. The full text is reproduced in this work.

518 . *Ibid.*, p. 489.

and a reliable chain of command'.⁵¹⁹ Whitson wrote that from Yan'an onwards there was a clear preference for a war of manoeuvre by Eighth Route Army senior officers, starting with battalion-sized operations rising to regimental size in 1938, ambushing smaller Japanese forces. It must be remembered that a communist battalion was often only a company in size and a regiment was often only battalion sized.

Guerrilla warfare was conducted by the local district battalion and village Red Guards, and not by the Eighth Route Army. They were expected to perform rear area security and harass Japanese forces as well as provide logistic support for the Eighth Route Army. Fighting Guomindang guerrillas was specifically tasked to the district battalion and Red Guards, especially after the Guomindang blockade of Yan'an, which commenced from May 1939.

Deng Xiaoping explicitly supported this division of labour, with the defence of the border areas left to the regular army who fought the battles against an enemy's main force. This characterised the Red Army's tactics during the Fifth Encirclement Campaign, which Mao vehemently criticised yet was happy to use in Yan'an. Deng further argued that the Eighth Route Army should use local and militia forces for combat roles only when necessary, as they were better suited for crop production, espionage and combat support services.⁵²⁰ The latter included rear area security, and instead of local forces, the Chinese Armed Police Force is now used for internal security missions including counter terrorist, insurgent, organised crime and riot control. Whitson argued that in the context of both a war against an invader (Japan) and a civil war (against the Guomindang), the regular commanders fought a conventional war and the provincial forces fought a People's War. Commanders could fight the style and type of war they wanted while 'procrastinating on ideological purity' which was finally sorted out in the *Zheng feng* rectification movement of 1942-43.⁵²¹

519 . Whitson, 1973, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

520 . Whitson, *op.cit*, p. 69.

521 . *Ibid.*

If the Operational Art is to win wars then it has to be asked why the Eighth Route Army undertook the One Hundred Regiments Campaign. Was Japanese strength and likely Japanese response underestimated? Lacking men, artillery, armour and aircraft, how were the Communist forces expected to defeat Japanese forces in a conventional war in North China?

The campaign itself made no operational sense as normally it would have been regarded by Mao as 'adventurism'. Mao wrote about 'adventurism', which he saw as a large-scale offensive operation where no decisive tactical or strategic outcome could occur. Indeed, he wrote specifically that the root cause of the defeat of the Jiangxi Soviet was 'the military adventurism of attacking key cities in 1932'.⁵²² This is precisely what happened as after the Communists' initial successes, and the Eighth Route Army's offensive was blunted and the Japanese First Army regrouped and went on the offensive.

Mao wrote succinctly that:

In preparing for a counteroffensive, we must select or create conditions favourable to ourselves and unfavourable to the enemy, so as to bring about a change in the balance of forces, before we go on to the stage of the counteroffensive.

In light of our past experience, during the stage of retreat we should in general secure at least two of the following conditions before we can consider the situation favourable to us and unfavourable to the enemy, and go over to the counteroffensive. The conditions are:

1. The people actively support the Red Army.
2. The terrain is favourable for operations.

⁵²² . Mao Zedong, *op.cit.*, p. 491.

3. The main forces of the Red Army are completely concentrated.
4. The enemy's weak points have been discovered.
5. The enemy has become exhausted and demoralised.
6. The enemy has been forced to make mistakes.⁵²³

These conditions required for a major offensive are not unique to Mao, and are what any competent commander would regard as necessary for a successful offensive operation. Thus it is necessary to ask: what overriding strategic condition required Mao to launch the One Hundred Regiments Campaign knowing it was bound to fail?

Chalmers Johnson in 1962 advanced several theories why the Eighth Route Army went on the offensive. These were either to prevent Japanese forces from crossing the Yellow River and taking Xi'an; as a reaction to General Tada's building of blockhouses that were encroaching into the neutral zone; and by acting against the Japanese forestalling any peace treaty between the Guomindang and the Japanese which would have been at the Communists' expense.⁵²⁴ The last certainly accords with the message Mao sent to the Comintern on 7 November 1940 writing that the Guomindang were 'inspiring a broad anti-Communist campaign to clear the way to direct capitulation to Japan'.⁵²⁵ He added that the 'Japanese are relentlessly organising punitive expeditions in northern China (and) our bases are diminishing and shrinking daily'.⁵²⁶ He neglected to mention that the Japanese attacks were the Japanese army's response to the One Hundred Regiments Campaign. In this respect his comments about the Guomindang capitulating to Japan could also be viewed as alarmist, so the Soviet Union would be more likely to supply the Red Army weapons.

523 . *Ibid.*, p. 501.

524 . Johnston, *op.cit.*, pp. 56 & 57.

525 . Dallin & Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 128 -130.

526 . *Ibid.*

Mao believed in active defence whenever possible, using mobility and rear area and flank attacks against an attacking force to keep them off their balance. This alone makes the decision to launch the One Hundred Regiments Campaign difficult to comprehend, as it went against Mao's own principles of war. Mao wrote that the first battle needed to be successful for the entire operation to be successful, and that the initial contact need not be the first battle.⁵²⁷ The destruction of the rail lines and damage to the coal mine was not the first battle, as there was no operational or strategic direction, something else about which Mao wrote scathingly.⁵²⁸

The Japanese North China Army was aware of the communist build-up in August 1940 but believed they were going to attack Guomindang units. The Eighth Route Army at least had the element of surprise. On 20 August 1940 the Eighth Army went on the offensive in what has become known as the One Hundred Regiments Campaign which ended on 5 December that year. The first phase was aimed at destroying Japanese infrastructure and communications and met with early success. One hundred and fifteen regiments were involved in the attack. From 20 August to 10 September Communist forces attacked the railway lines that separated the communist base areas and succeeded in blowing up bridges, tunnels and destroying track.⁵²⁹ The Shijiazhuang to Taiyuan railway line was rendered almost useless, and the Qingxing coal mine which was a major fuel source for the Japanese forces, was seriously damaged as well.

Railway destruction missions were generally successful and the second phase, the attacking of Japanese blockhouses and cities ran from 20 September to early October. This was generally a failure as the Eighth Route Army's lack of firepower meant large casualties for little reward. The third phase was the resulting Japanese response, lasting from 6 October to 5 December, and was brutal.

527 . Mao wrote extensively about this in his textbook under the heading, 'The Problem of Starting a Counteroffensive', *Ibid.*, pp. 510 - 523.

528 . *Ibid.*, pp. 484 & 485.

529 . Johnson, C.A. *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1962, p. 57.

A shortage of field personnel in the Japanese Army stationed in North China was the only reason that they did not pursue the Communists more vigorously.⁵³⁰ The Japanese control of North China was based on the concept of zones and the most important one for the Eighth Route Army was the neutral zone that existed between the main areas of control of both the Communists and the Japanese army in North China. Li identified four phases in the Japanese rural pacification efforts:

1. to secure control over the land alongside railways;
2. to expand from areas of semi-occupation into the neutral zones;
3. to crush Chinese communist guerrilla base areas; and
4. the contraction of areas of Japanese control as a result of Communist-controlled areas and Communist infiltrations into Japanese –held territories.⁵³¹

Li noted that phase one continued until the fall of Wuhan, whereupon the freeing up of Japanese troops enabled phase two to commence. Phase three began with the One Hundred Regiments campaign. The fourth phase started when the CCP started to infiltrate back to the now enlarged neutral zone after the ‘Three All’ campaign (see below).⁵³² The Japanese retaliation for the Hundred Regiments campaign ended up being a punitive campaign that, although it ‘broke pots and pans’ and decimated the Chinese Communist Party infrastructure, turned the villagers against the Japanese due to the damage and killings they endured.

Mao did not expect the ferocity of the Japanese response with its doctrine of *sankō-seisaku* which translates as ‘Three All’ (‘Kill all, burn all, loot all’). Assisted by Japanese military personnel loaned by the Guandongzhou Army, it decimated the Communist support base in the countryside as well as causing immense casualties to the Eighth Route

530 . Li. *op. cit.*, p. 187.

531 . *Ibid.*

532 . *Ibid.*, pp. 199 & 200.

Army, especially amongst the cadres. From mid-1941 until late 1942 the *sankō* campaign saw the Eighth Route Army shrink in size from 400,000 to 300,000 and the population under Communist control from 40 million to 25 million.⁵³³ The surviving villagers, as a matter of continued survival and partly due to nationalism, went over to the Communists where many previously may have wavered.

Jencks called the One Hundred Regiments Campaign a disaster for the Eighth Route Army but the Japanese failure to destroy the Chinese Communist base areas meant, that like the German victories in the Soviet Union in 1941, the campaign was a tactical victory but the strategic advantage was still ultimately with the Communists.⁵³⁴ The Soviet Union provided military advisors and there were some in Yan'an prior to the Japanese *sankō* campaign but their relationship with the Chinese Communists was, at times, strained.⁵³⁵ The depletion of Japanese field personnel for the war in the Pacific against the United States allowed the Communists to gradually regain, and then increase, the areas of North China under their control. Cadres started to re-enter many areas in the Spring of 1943 and the areas under Communist control quickly increased beyond the August 1940 figures.⁵³⁶

The lessons learnt from the One Hundred Regiments Campaign and the resultant *sankō* campaigns meant the Eighth Route Army would not launch another major operation until 1946, after it had received heavy equipment and supplies from the Soviet Union. The operational art of the Communists reverted to People's War as the Chinese Communist Party was more concerned with expanding its territories and political control of these newly acquired areas.

533 . Johnson, *op.cit.*, p. 58.

534 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, pp. 41 & 42.

535 . Dallin, & Firsov, *op.cit.*, p. 145.

536 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

The blockade by both Japanese and Guomindang was causing economic problems to the Communist base areas and the supply of war materiel, as in the Jiangxi Soviet, was from weapons captured from the Japanese and their puppet forces. These effects of the blockade reduced Eighth Route Army military operations against the Japanese after the One Hundred Regiments Campaign to guerrilla warfare only. This was secondary in any case compared to establishing the areas under Communist control and economic guerrilla warfare - denying the Japanese food crops, disrupting their lines of communication and stopping them from currency manipulation.⁵³⁷ The Eighth Route Army for example aided in harvesting crops before the Japanese could appropriate them, which besides supplying their own needs, increased their influence amongst the peasants. The Communists were conserving their forces, knowing that the war was going against Japan and that eventually it would surrender, releasing the Guomindang forces to renew attacks against them.

The agreement stopping Guomindang attacks against the Communists did not stop their actions against Zhang Guotao's forces nor end the blockade of Yan'an. The 'United Front' effectively ended when the Guomindang attacked the New Fourth Army headquarters in January 1941. Mao sent Stalin a message on 7 November 1940 that asked Stalin for directions on what the CCP's response should be to Chiang Kai-shek's demand for the removal of Eighth and Fourth Route Armies from Shandong, otherwise the 200,000 Guomindang soldiers massed for a punitive expedition would attack them.⁵³⁸ Stalin's response was to tell them to await their reply 'due to the complexity of the problem'.⁵³⁹

The core of the New Fourth Army, under Ye Ting, was the blocking force that held up the Guomindang after the Long March and had continued to harass Guomindang forces

537 . Johnson, *op.cit*, pp. 60 & 61.

538 . *Ibid.*, pp 127 & 128.

539 . *Ibid.*, p. 101.

in eastern Jiangxi and western Fujian provinces.⁵⁴⁰ Former Red Army soldiers, who had turned to other pursuits after the Long March, also rejoined - further adding experienced personnel to the force.⁵⁴¹

Vacillation proved deadly as Guomindang forces surrounded, then attacked, a column of 10,000 members of the New Fourth Army under Ye Ting and Xiang Yin. They were attacked near the market town of Maolin, about 32 kilometres southeast of their base at Yunling, killing between 7,000 and 9,000 and capturing some 3,000 to 4,000 of whom perhaps 10 percent survived the war.⁵⁴² Along with Chiang Kai-shek's counterrevolutionary decree on 17 January 1941 aimed specifically at the Chinese Communist Party, this effectively ended the facade of the 'Second United Front'. Mao informed Stalin in a message dated 13 February 1941 that unless the Guomindang stopped attacking them and acceded to 11 other demands, over which Zhou Enlai and the Guomindang were in discussion, the Chinese Communists would withdraw from working with the Guomindang.⁵⁴³ Mao was not hopeful of reconciliation, as his message of 6 February 1941 indicated.⁵⁴⁴

The Soviets had been supplying the Guomindang with weapons as they were fighting the Japanese who the Russians wanted kept busy in a conflict, lest they attack them again in Mongolia. Stalin favoured the Guomindang as it was the larger force. Between August 1937 and August 1941, the Soviet Union supplied approximately 900 aircraft, 82 tanks, 1,000 pieces of artillery with over two million rounds, almost 32,000 bombs, nearly

540 . Carlson, E.F. *The Chinese Army Its Organization and Military Efficiency*, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1940, pp. 41 & 42.

541 . *Ibid.*

542 . The numbers vary. Benton, G. *New Fourth Army Communist Resistance Along the Yangtze and the Huai 1938-1941*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1999, p. 511.

543 . *Ibid.*, pp. 137 – 140

544 . *Ibid.*, p. 136.

10,000 machine guns and 50,000 rifles.⁵⁴⁵ Mao argued that after the Wannan Incident that supplies to the Guomindang should cease but they only stopped due the Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union.⁵⁴⁶ The Red Army got no supplies from the Soviet Union during this period, and during the entire Second World War the Red Army received only six anti-aircraft guns and 120 machine guns in early 1943 from the Soviets.⁵⁴⁷

The Red Army had rebuilt itself from 1943 and in July 1946 was renamed the People's Liberation Army to signify its mission and was ready to wrest control of China.⁵⁴⁸ The Soviet Union supplied weapons it had captured from the Japanese Kwantung Army, which included 11,000 heavy and 3,000 light machine guns, 1,800 pieces of artillery and 2,500 mortars and grenade launchers.⁵⁴⁹ Japanese soldiers who were still working with the PLA gave invaluable assistance in the training and maintenance of all this new equipment.⁵⁵⁰ When the People's Liberation Army took Tianjin, most of their artillery gunners were ex-Japanese soldiers.⁵⁵¹ The Soviets supplemented ex-Japanese weapons with ones from Czech and their own factories. Captured Guomindang weapons were the most prized of all, especially the modern United States 105mm artillery. Part of the rebuilding, particularly under the pressure of the Japanese, was to ensure loyalty to the Party and to Mao as well. Known as the Zheng Feng Rectification (Rectification of Work-Style) Movement, it saw the orthodox Marxist-Leninist line turn into what is now termed Maoism and ensured Mao's grip on the Chinese Communist Party.⁵⁵² Jencks

545 . Benton, *op.cit.*, p. 595; Heinzig, D. *The Soviet Union and Communist China 1945-1959: The Arduous Alliance*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk, 2004, p. 27.

546 . *Ibid.*

547 . *Ibid.*

548 . Heinzig, *op.cit.*, p. 118.

549 . Gillen D.G. & Etter, C. 'Staying On: Japanese Soldiers and Civilians in China, 1945-1949', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Volume 42, Number 3, May 1983, p. 514.

550 . *Ibid.*, p. 511.

551 . *Ibid.*

552 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

referred to this as Mao's 'mass-line', which was to unify the Party, army, and the masses into one homogenous group under Mao's leadership and direction.⁵⁵³

The Zheng Feng Rectification Movement started with Mao's speech of 1 February 1942 titled, 'Reform in Learning, the Party and Literature'. The head of the Party's secret police, Kang Sheng, used internal examinations (confessions) and 'struggle meetings' where people openly accused each other of being counter-revolutionaries.⁵⁵⁴ Some sort of rectification movement was needed to ensure Party discipline in the crisis which was occurring due to the Japanese *sankō* offensives that were occurring against the base areas and to ensure that any form of 'warlordism' was removed before the forthcoming battles against the Guomindang for the control of China.

Kang was after people who were 'half-hearted' (lacking in genuine revolutionary fervour) as well as 'spies, enemies and Trotskyites', and embarked on a purge of the Party.⁵⁵⁵ A series of training classes to instil the new orthodoxy into the Party cadres was organised.⁵⁵⁶ Party translators only completed the full works of Marx and Lenin into Chinese in late 1939; some other Communist works took until 1942, and these gave Mao his intellectual base to stamp his authority on the Party.⁵⁵⁷ Zheng Feng was a key to the victories of the CCP after 1946.⁵⁵⁸

Post Second World War

553 . *Ibid.*

554 . Dai Qing. *Wang Shiwei and "Wild Lilies": Rectification and Purges in the Chinese Communist Party 1942-1944*, Apter, D.E. & Creek, T. (eds); Liu, N. & Sullivan, L.R. (trans); Documents compiled by Song Jinshou, ME Sharpe, Armonk, 1994, p. xx.

555 . *Ibid.*

556 . *Ibid.*, pp. 146-155.

557 . *Ibid.*, pp. 185 & 186.

558 . *Ibid.*, pp. xxiv & xxv.

The Soviet Union invaded Manchuria in August 1945 and did not leave until May 1946. They conducted joint operations with the Red Army in August and September including parts of Inner Mongolia, Jehol and Shanhaiguan, which was known as ‘the gateway to Manchuria’.⁵⁵⁹ They became more circumspect when United States forces landed in North China and took control of the major ports on the coast and Shandong, Hebei, Tianjin, and Beijing along with Guomintang troops from 30 September 1945.⁵⁶⁰ US amphibious ships staged a landing at Qinghuangdao on 27 and 30 October 1945 landing Guomintang and US Army units who rapidly proceeded along the Tianjin-Shenyang (Mukden) Railway. This was the only time that US land forces operated alongside Guomintang personnel in a combat operation.⁵⁶¹

Moscow subsequently had a pro-Guomintang Policy and ordered Red Army units away from the railway lines. Chinese Communists were removed from power in Manchuria either ‘voluntarily’ or were removed openly by Soviet forces. In this period from mid-November 1945 to March 1946, the Guomintang took control of Manchuria. Guomintang forces retook Shanhaiguan and repulsed a doomed counterattack by Lin Biao’s forces who dispersed into the countryside.⁵⁶²

The United States tried to mediate between the Chinese Communist Party and the Guomintang but their efforts were doomed from the start. In December 1945 General George C. Marshall started negotiations between the Guomintang and the Chinese Communist Party to negotiate a ceasefire and then peacefully form an united China. The US Ambassador to China, Patrick J. Hurley, had been openly supporting the Guomintang. It never had a chance of achieving its aims and the talks broke down with the Chinese Communist Party deciding on 18 April 1946 to unify China by military

559 . Heinzig, *op.cit.*, p. 81.

560. *Ibid.*

561 . *Ibid.*, pp. 90 & 91.

562 . Heinzig, *op.cit.*, p. 93

means.⁵⁶³ Military action by the Red Army against the Guomindang had already occurred from the beginning of April when Communist forces tried to stop Guomindang forces from breaking through to Changchan from Siping. The Red Army units were soundly defeated.⁵⁶⁴

As the Soviet forces left Manchuria they openly sided with the Chinese Communist Party handing over control of a large part of Northern Manchuria to them.⁵⁶⁵ The Chinese Communists were not universally welcomed as the Russian occupation of Manchuria had been brutal with murders, rape and looting commonplace, harking back to the White Russian Armies' actions in the early 1920s.⁵⁶⁶ The last Soviet soldier left on 3 May 1946 and by that time it was estimated by using the United States military figures that the Soviets had removed US\$9 billion worth of factories and other material.⁵⁶⁷ This is a significant figure remembering it is in 1945 dollars.

In May 1946 an offensive by the Guomindang captured Changchan and Kirin. Following a mutually agreed ceasefire the Guomindang used this time to capture almost all of the cities in Manchuria by year's end. The now renamed People's Liberation Army used this as a time to recruit, train and rearm its forces ready for the battles to come in 1947.⁵⁶⁸

The first campaign the Communists launched was the Liaoshen Campaign to capture Manchuria. The Communists had previously moved out of Yan'an and established a mobile headquarters in their campaign against the Guomindang. Aided by poor morale and in-fighting among Guomindang generals the PLA surrounded the various cities, initially without attacking them, to establish their control of the countryside and the

563 . *Ibid.*, pp. 97 & 99.

564 . *Ibid.*, p. 99.

565 . *Ibid.*, p.100.

566 . *Ibid.*, p. 82.

567 . Heinzig, *op. cit.*, pp. 88 & 101.

568 . *Ibid.*

infrastructure. They ambushed Guomindang forces when they moved out of the cities and their first major success was taking Jinzhou on 14 October 1948, blocking the retreat of Guomindang forces from the North China plain. Guomindang forces in Changchun surrendered on 21 October 1947 after Zeng Zesheng rebelled and turned to the Communists opening the way for the PLA to attack Changsan unimpeded.

In pre-1949 China, defecting to the enemy was not seen as traitorous and often occurred. Many were poor peasants, who had been forced into the Guomindang, and many were generally faithful to their commander and not the Guomindang centrally, as it was the commander who was responsible for ensuring they were fed, paid on time and looked after. As noted in Chapter Two of this thesis, the policy of taking in defecting soldiers was a lynchpin of the Red Army from its earliest days and was enshrined as Communist Operational Principle Number Nine. This stated that ‘the main source of manpower was at the front and that most of the enemy personnel...could be incorporated into their units’.⁵⁶⁹ This was generally taken to be 80 to 90 percent of the enlisted men and a small number of junior officers.⁵⁷⁰ The Fourth Column of the East China Field Army (ECFA) had a systematic program for re-educating these soldiers and absorbing them into its forces, bringing 13,000 ex-Guomindang forces into its force between 6 November and 15 December 1948.⁵⁷¹ To this must be added the entire Guomindang XVCI Corps which defected intact under the command of Wu Huawen on 19 September 1948 during the ECFA campaign to take Jinan.⁵⁷² This was renamed as the XXXV Corps and became part of the ECFA.⁵⁷³ The ranks of the PLA swelled with these new soldiers and from the

569 . Bjorge, G.J. *Moving the Enemy: Operational Art in the Chinese PLA's Huai Hai Campaign*, Combat Studies Institute, Fort Leavenworth, 2003, p. 231. This is the definitive work on the Huai Hua Campaign being a US Army funded project in collaboration with Chinese military scholars and the PLA archives.

570 . *Ibid.*

571 . *Ibid.*, pp 186 & 187.

572 . *Ibid.*, footnote 63, p. 244.

573 . *Ibid.*

US-supplied equipment that the forces in Manchuria held. Communist forces in Northern China were stopping Guomintang reinforcements reaching Manchuria by land.

The PLA then moved in a pincer action to cut off the remaining Guomintang forces in Manchuria before attacking Shenyang proper. By 28 October 1948, the Battle of Liaoxi had seen the PLA take another 100,000 of the Guomintang forces. Shenyang was attacked on three sides on 29 October 1948 and by 1 November was taken by the PLA. The collapse of Guomintang morale aided the PLA to take Shenyang so quickly and Manchuria was lost to the Guomintang with another 134,000 soldiers. PLA forces quickly absorbed these new soldiers and learned how to use the new equipment to prepare for the assault on the Guomintang forces north of the Yangtze. They did this by creating schools to integrate the equipment and become an army capable of using artillery and tanks in a coordinated manner. Ex-Guomintang officers and soldiers as well as Japanese prisoners of war were employed to this end.

The Huai Hai Campaign and the Destruction of Guomintang Forces in North China

Using a similar operational art of isolating Guomintang forces and attacking them individually, the PLA gathered a series of victories again compounded by Guomintang forces not coordinating their defence and counterattacks. The PLA always tried to make the Guomintang forces react to its movements, forcing them to move their units, wearing them out and enabling PLA ambushes. Forced GMD movements denuded the defences of positions the PLA were to attack. Employing deception operations — always high on the Chinese Communist operational art — both forced these movements and deceived the Guomintang of the PLA's true intentions. Deception measures even extended to the need to preserve the secrecy of Soviet aid, which saw Lin Biao's soldiers rearmed with captured American weapons instead of any Soviet ones, before they marched

triumphantly into Beijing. This was also to show 'how Chiang Kai-shek supplies the troops of the People's Liberation Army with American technology'.⁵⁷⁴

By quickly manoeuvring its forces and attacking from unexpected directions the PLA got inside the Guomindang's decision cycle causing strategic paralysis. Whole units surrendered and were quickly absorbed into the PLA so that by the end of the campaign the force had 40,000 more soldiers than when it started. The loss of 500,000 soldiers led to the rapid collapse of the last Guomindang forces north of the Yangtze in the Ping Jin Campaign. Tianjin fell to the Northeast China Field Army (NECFA) after less than two days fighting on 15 January 1949 with the loss of a further 130,000 soldiers and Fu Zuoyi surrendered the 200,000 soldiers he commanded around Beijing without a shot being fired on 21 January.⁵⁷⁵ The operational art of the Northeast China Field Army was high as it involved combined operations on urban terrain. The NECFA employed an early version of the *Quantou* (fist) units of the 1980s and 1990s, using infantry, ex-Japanese tanks and mountain guns to destroy the Guomindang defences.⁵⁷⁶ No organised Guomindang forces now existed north of the Yangtze and the PLA underwent a period of rest, re-equipment and regrouping, absorbing new soldiers into the PLA.

Chinese historians view this campaign in three phases but Bjorge saw it as a continual offensive, taking advantage of a disintegrating Guomindang which at the start of the battle comprised seven armies.⁵⁷⁷ The two main forces were different in style, revealing the two differing styles of the PLA and what went on to precipitate the 'Red versus Expert' arguments which crippled the PLA from the late 1950s until the debacle of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War.

574 . Heinzig, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

575 . Bjorge, *op.cit.*, p. 245.

576 . 'Lujunbong he xietong: hecheng quantoude chengli', *Junshi shijie*, 2007 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 185, pp. 8 – 13

577 . *Ibid.*, pp. 6 & 7.

In the Huai Hai Campaign the PLA used the East China Field Army (EFCA) under Su Yu and the Central Plains Field Army (CPFA) under Liu Bocheng. These two commanders were completely different as were their forces. Su Yu was an impressive guerilla commander and had been part of the forces that stayed as the rearguard in the Jiangxi Soviet after the main forces went on the Long March. He survived the 1941 attack on the New Fourth Army, and after its reconstruction became its deputy commander. His use of smaller forces to destroy larger Guomindang forces in 1946 and 1947 saw him become the acting commander of the EFCA.⁵⁷⁸ Unlike Liu Bocheng, whose biography is in Chapter Two of this thesis, Su received no formal military education in the Soviet Union, and used *Sunzi Bingfa* for his operational planning whereas Liu Bocheng used his Soviet training on the operational art.

The PLA's offensive started when the CPFA and ECFA tried to catch Guomindang units attempting to cross the Yangtze River on one bridge. Unable to stop the Guomindang redeployment, Su Yu revealed his trump card. His political staff had been negotiating with the Third Pacification Area, a corps sized unit. On 7 November the defections started and by 8 November 23,000 men had defected and a further 5,000 who had not were heading towards Xuzhou in haste. This opened up a sizeable gap in the Guomindang's defences and enabled the ECFA to surround the Seventh Field Army by 10 November. This gap was exploited by the CPFA which now controlled the central position, effectively splitting the Guomindang forces in the North China Plain in two, and headed south towards Suxian.⁵⁷⁹ Factionalism had played into the PLA's hands with Li Mi's refusal to assist Huang Baitao help on 8 November, effectively isolating his Seventh Field Army.⁵⁸⁰ This was after the destruction of the Guomindang's LXIII Corps by the same force that was attempting to encircle his force.⁵⁸¹

578 . Bjorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 26 & 27.

579 . *Ibid.*, p. 129.

580 . *Ibid.*, p. 125.

581 . *Ibid.*, p. 124.

Lead elements of the 12th Army on 19 November tried to break through to the besieged Seventh Army and came close as they were stronger in firepower than the PLA columns screening the besieging forces. However they could not reach it due to blocking attacks.⁵⁸² At the same time ECFA columns had organized a night general attack on the Seventh Field Army; it did not meet all the objectives but seriously damaged the Guomintang defences. On the night of the 21st, not allowing any time for the Seventh Field Army to rebuild its defences, the Fourth, Eighth and Ninth Columns launched another general attack. Following a heavy artillery bombardment, the Fourth Column moved against villages north of Dayuanshang, the Eighth Column moved against villages east, and the Ninth Column conducted a direct assault on Dayuanshang. On 22 November, Ninth Column units had penetrated and defeated the Dayuanshang defences with the Seventh Army reduced to a few units holding several tiny hamlets north of Dayuanshang. Huang Baitao ordered his forces to disperse and try to escape through the PLA's lines but Huang and his aides came under fire; Huang took his life after being wounded.⁵⁸³ Guomintang soldiers numbering 2,000 to 3,000 made their way to other Guomintang lines, but 25,000 of their colleagues lay dead with another 80,000 prisoners. The ratio of forces was tipping towards the PLA.⁵⁸⁴

The defection of the 110th Division on 27 November sealed the fate of the Guomintang 12th Army in Suxian. The divisional commander, Liao Yunzhuo, had been a member of the CCP since March 1927 during the Northern Expedition and besides bringing the division over also forwarded the plans of the breakout. The counterattack to breakout and recapture the Central Portion of the North China Plains ended in failure with the loss of another division and its link up with the Sixth and Eighth Armies was thwarted.⁵⁸⁵ They were forced to withdraw to Benghou and set up a defensive position. The 12th Army was isolated 60 kilometres to the northwest. In a coordinated attack the

582 . *Ibid.*, pp. 155 & 156.

583 . *Ibid.*, p. 160.

584 . *Ibid.*, p. 162.

585 . *Ibid.*, pp. 184 & 185.

Guomindang's 16th and 25th Armies using armour, artillery and air support attacked ECFA positions in an attempt to move south to Suxian, which if successful would threaten the CPFA's rear and possibly break the 12th Army's encirclement.⁵⁸⁶

The ECRA Army prepared three lines of defences around Xuzhou and the Guomindang repeatedly smashed itself against them. The PLA fed in reinforcements, especially around Yuzhou and these included many ex-Guomindang soldiers. In the battle of attrition which the battles around Xuzhou had become, these soldiers helped tip the balance.⁵⁸⁷ If this was a miniature Kursk, then the siege of the 12th Army in Suxian had become a miniature Stalingrad. Both sides were suffering casualties at an alarming rate and the CPFA had to change its tactics as the Guomindang defenders were not going to surrender easily.

The CPFA decided to employ approach trenches dug at night to get closer to the positions where they could jump off and 'hug the enemy' negating the 12th Army's strength in artillery. The first were dug too far away and were now dug closer to the jump off points around 50 metres from the 12th Army's defences, with every squad in the first assault given a light machine gun. To deal with the flamethrowers which the PLA assault waves feared, two *bishou* (dagger) squads in each platoon received submachine guns and carbines tasked to kill the soldiers carrying flamethrowers. These tactics were successful and gradually wore the defenders down, seeing the perimeter shrink. A pack howitzer battery of four guns was also in direct support and to neutralise any Guomindang artillery that was located.⁵⁸⁸

To aid the CPFA, the ECFA transferred three columns along with extra artillery; they were in place by 13 December. The 12th Army commander decided to attempt a breakout with what forces he had left. This was planned for 15 December 1949 but unfortunately for the 12th Army the PLA conducted a general offensive on 14 December

586 . *Ibid.*, p. 186.

587 . *Ibid.*, pp. 185 & 186.

588 . *Ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

with the three ECFA columns leading the assault from the 12th Army's rear. Their artillery destroyed defences and telephone cables creating gaps for the advancing infantry and creating confusion by destroying any semblance of command and control. The final battle was over on 15 December as the Guomintang soldiers who tried to break out were either killed or captured by the surrounding PLA forces. The 12th Army's commander, Huang Wei, along with the X, XVIII and LXXV Corps commanders were among the captured. The PLA was now free to finish off Du Yuming's army group – the Guomintang's last field force left in North China. As the CPFA and the ECFA forces were transferred to the Beghou area the PLA decided to try political action instead of military action to reduce Du Yuming's forces.

The reasons were threefold: to deceive the Guomintang as to the dispositions of the PLA and the exhaustion of the EFCA and the CPFA; to reduce Du Yuming's forces without taking casualties; and to hide the fact that other PLA forces were cutting off the Beijing to Tianjin railway, and concentrating forces to attack them. The PLA did not want the Tianjin garrison evacuated by sea, but captured and removed from the battle.⁵⁸⁹ For 16 days no military action was taken against Du Yuming's forces but gradually a steady flow of soldiers started to defect from the Guomintang and the two PLA field armies rested and regrouped for the final offensive of the campaign. In this period the attack was planned, there were to be 10 columns each with supporting artillery for attacking from all directions. Each column was to supply a battalion or regimental strength light assault forces, equipped with ample ammunition and two days' rations; their mission was to bypass the lead defences and strike at the command and control and logistic centres, as well as movement choke points to disrupt the rear areas.

On 7 January, after having begun the offensive on the previous day, more than 20 villages had been taken and what remained of the 13th Army was in disarray. Heavy losses had also been inflicted on the Second Army's LXXII Corps, and the remaining units withdrew to the west. In less than two days Su Yu's force had achieved what he had

589 . *Ibid.*, pp. 231 & 232.

estimated would take three to seven days. On 8 January the Guomindang's east flank was so compressed that the PLA's Bohai Column was shifted from the east side of the pocket to the west side as there was no space for four columns. It was placed under southern group command and sent into the line between the Eighth and Ninth Columns.⁵⁹⁰

Despite Guomindang air strikes, by late 9 January the Third, Fourth and 10th Columns were all nearing the heart of the Nationalist command. Du Yuming and Qiu Qingquan abandoned Chenguanzhuang and went to Chenzhuang to meet with Li Mi and V Corps commander Xiong Xiaosan. Du authorised a breakout towards the west but was a complete failure. Some soldiers including Li Mi made it to Guomindang lines but they were the few exceptions. Before dawn on 10 January the 10th Column entered Chenguanzhuang and the Fourth Column entered Chenzhuang. During the next several hours these two columns and those attacking from other directions swept across what remained of the pocket. By 1600 hours the fighting was over with all Guomindang forces either captured or destroyed. The Huai Hai Campaign was over.⁵⁹¹

Why did the Guomindang fail? Du Yuming, the Guomindang commander captured and imprisoned by the PLA, blamed overly centralised command and control, as well as factionalism inside the Guomindang. To this must be added the almost total lack of battlefield intelligence.⁵⁹² The defection of entire units meant that none could really be trusted and factionalism meant that some units would not come to another's aid, co-ordinate an attack, or retreat with them.

The United States was under no illusions as to the disasters that had befallen the Guomindang, nor the ineptness of many of their commanders. In a report dated November 1948 in the Battles of Tsinan the Liaoaming Corridor, Changchun and Shenyang, they estimated the Guomindang to have lost over 320,000 men including eight

590 . *Ibid.*, p. 240.

591 . *Ibid.*, pp. 240 & 241.

592 . *Ibid.*, pp. 108 & 109.

divisions that were predominantly equipped (at 85 percent) by the United States.⁵⁹³ In December 1948, the US Military Attaché in Nanjing reported that 80 percent of the weapons and 75 percent of the ammunition that the United States had supplied the Guomindang had been captured.⁵⁹⁴ This amounted to 17 United States equipped divisions, with virtually none destroyed prior to the Guomindang defeats, revealing a low state of morale, the mass defections and surrenders.⁵⁹⁵ This was before the end of the Huai Hai Campaign which saw the destruction of all Guomindang forces north of the Yangtze.

The failure of the Guomindang was best summed up by the General Barr who reflected what the United States attaches and observers in China thought of the Guomindang. In a report to the Department of the Army, dated 16 November 1948, he said:

Military matériel and economic aid in my opinion is less important to the salvation of China than other factors. No battle has been lost since my arrival due to lack of ammunition or equipment. Their military debacles in my opinion can all be attributed to the world's worst leadership and many other morale destroying factors that lead to a complete loss of will to fight. The complete ineptness of high military leaders and the widespread corruption and dishonesty throughout the Armed Forces, could, in some measure, have been controlled and directed had the authority and facilities been available. Chinese leaders completely lack the moral courage to issue and enforce an unpopular decision.⁵⁹⁶

593 . *United States Relations with China with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949*, Department of State, Washington DC, August 1949, p. 357.

594 . *Ibid.*

595 . *Ibid.*

596 . *United States Relations with China with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949*, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

On 21 April, the PLA crossed the Yangtze on a 500-kilometre front centred approximately 100 kilometres west of Nanjing. Led by the Second Field Army (the renamed Central Plains Field Army) and the Third Field Army (the renamed East China Field Army), they entered Southern China in force and advanced rapidly. Nanjing fell on 23 April, Hangzhou on 3 May, and Shanghai on 27 May. In early May part of the Fourth Field Army (the renamed NECFA) opened a new front in the Wuhan area.⁵⁹⁷ Opposition collapsed and the PLA sent units throughout China to remove Guomindang resistance. On 1 October 1949, with most of China under control of the Chinese Communist Party and its organs, Mao Zedong in Shanghai — the city where the First CCP Congress was held — proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

The Operational Art and Lessons Learnt by the PLA: Red Versus Expert - Su Yu and Liu Bocheng

Which operational art worked the best: that of the Red Army officers who studied at the Whampoa Academy or the operational art of the officers who studied at the Frunze Academy that defined the PLA's operational art on the Soviet model?⁵⁹⁸ Sun Yu was for the best part of his career a guerrilla warfare fighter and organiser of base areas and guerrilla forces who studied Sun Tzu using a combined arms force in the Huai Hai Campaign. Liu Bocheng was an officer trained in the Soviet model of the operational art using primarily an infantry force armed as guerrillas. Liu Bocheng used his forces' higher mobility to act as an envelopment force and to attack the rear and flanks, whereas Sun Yu's force was far better equipped for assaulting fortified terrain.

The Huai Hai Campaign demonstrated that the PLA was no ragtag organisation but a well trained and reasonably well equipped force. With the capture of the equipment in North

597 . Bjorge, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

598 . For an explanation of the two different Soviet models on the PLA see Jencks, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 – 41.

China it was well equipped by regional standards but fell short of United States and Soviet artillery standards; but their infantry battalions were on par in firepower.

The PLA did not lack from ammunition either after capturing so much materiel in Manchuria. By the end of the Huai Hai Campaign there were over five million porters who had moved approximately 680,000 mortar and artillery rounds and over 209 million small arms cartridges.⁵⁹⁹ The success of the militia and the porters led to their over-reliance in the post-Liberation PLA which was one of the reasons for the heavy casualties suffered by the PLA in the Sino-Japanese War. Both 'Red' and 'Expert' performed well, which was to be expected. The mass surrenders and defections aided both, and the reliance on mass uprising and defections was a feature particular to China and did not occur in the Korean War where the lack of artillery and motorised logistics were a factor in the PLA's defeats after their initial gains, albeit for heavy casualties.

In terms of organisation, the CPFA was a predominately infantry force whereas the EFCA had a combined arms focus, and reflected the fact that it had acquired United States equipment after its operations in Manchuria. The EFCA was better for positional defence and attacking fortified towns whereas the CPFA was more mobile and could move rapidly to out manoeuvre Guomindang units. The CPFA had lost its artillery during its operations in August 1947 march to the Dabie mountains to establish base areas near Wuhan and the Guomindang capital of Nanjing forcing the Guomindang to deploy 33 divisions, totaling around 330,000 soldiers against Liu Bocheng's force of around 120,000.⁶⁰⁰ Tying up so many Guomindang divisions and denuding them from defending other areas of North China aided PLA operations elsewhere.

The largest unit in both armies was the column, which equates to a corps of two or three divisions of 20,000 to 30,000 personnel but the Fourth Column with the addition of the Southern Shaanxi division was the largest of the campaign with 45,000 soldiers. The

599 . Bjorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 103 & 104.

600 . Bjorge, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 , 40 & 97.

divisions were being organised on the triangular structure with three regiments to the division, three battalions per the regiment, three companies to the battalion, three platoons to the company and three squads to the platoon. At each level was a fire support.⁶⁰¹ The ECFA divisions were more advanced in reorganisation than the CPFA and their division being around 1,000 soldiers larger at 9,000 compared to the CPFA's 7,000 to 8,000.⁶⁰²

There was at the time no standard table of organization and equipment (TO&E) for a PLA division but one was being worked on. Even inside the same field army the following paper TO&E's were unlikely to be standardized. What is shown is the lack of firepower in a CPFA division compared to its ECFA counterpart.

On paper an ECFA division had:

4 – 8 75mm Pack Howitzers 4-8,
 20 82mm Mortars,
 36 60mm Mortars,
 36 Heavy Machine Guns,
 180 Light Machine Guns,
 250 Automatic Rifles,
 2800 Rifles,
 350 Carbines, and
 130 Pistols.

A CPFA division had:

2 – 4 75mm Pack Howitzers,
 9 82mm Mortars,
 12 60mm Mortars,

601 . *Ibid.*, p. 96.

602 . *Ibid.*

30 Heavy Machine Guns,
 150 Light Machine Guns,
 150 Automatic Rifles,
 2000 Rifles,
 300 Carbines,
 100 Pistols, and
 10 (?) Explosive Launching Tubes.⁶⁰³

There were no 105mm howitzers in a CPFA column which was fortunate to have a full artillery battalion of three companies with a total of 12 guns, which might include ex-Japanese guns and not the modern ex-US 75mm pack howitzers. By contrast in 1948, the ECRA had, due to captured Guomindang weapons, full artillery battalions with 75mm pack howitzers. As the Third, Ninth, 10th, and 13th Columns were designated as special attack columns, they were given specialised training in infantry and artillery cooperation as well as assault tactics and extra fire support. In the Third Column divisional artillery was two 75mm pack howitzer batteries instead of the usual one, and the Column received a battery of 105mm howitzers.

The ECFA's Special Type Column had, by the start of the Huai Hai Campaign, grown to be an expanded division with approximately 11,000 soldiers, containing three artillery regiments and contained the ECFA's small light tank force of around 20 tanks and several engineer battalions. Each of the three artillery regiments had three battalions, and every battalion had three companies with a battery of four guns in each company. Two of the regiments had 105mm howitzers, and the third had 36 Japanese 75mm guns.⁶⁰⁴ Compared to a British First World War corps it still lacked artillery, mortars and machine guns, let alone a Second World War infantry corps.

603 . The 'explosive launching tube' was an improvised weapon fabricated from local material. It was basically a metal cylinder approximately 70 centimeters in diameter and 70 centimeters high. It was used to shoot a 20-kilogram bundle of explosives a few hundred yards at low velocity. The weapon was highly inaccurate, but against fixed encircled forces it created important psychological as well as physical effects. *Ibid.*, pp. 96 & 97.

604 . *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Guomindang forces were generally similar in structure but were more numerous, had far more artillery and heavy mortars and over 200 M3A Stuart light tanks, 80 fighters, 40 bombers and 40 transports in support. Their being 'penny packeted' to support infantry units, instead of being centralised in a division, negated the shock and firepower of the tanks.

The lessons of 1927 – 1935 had been absorbed by the People's Liberation Army and it went from a force that was just surviving after the Long March to a politically and militarily reliable and conventional armed force that was able to defeat the Guomindang in a little over two years. The force was about to re-enter the crucible of combat battle in the Korean peninsula, suffering devastating losses amongst its veterans but at the same time modernising with the assistance of Soviet assistance. The 'Red versus Expert' arguments, coinciding with the Chinese and Soviet schism in 1959 and the subsequent Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, saw the PLA forget these hard won lessons. The performance of the PLA in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War exposed the need to relearn these lessons.

Chapter Four

The Human Element: Operational Art and Tactics Become Moribund, 1953 - 1979

This chapter will examine the human element in operational art and tactics from the end of the War of Liberation to the debacle of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. After liberation the PLA had to face whether it was to become a peasant or regular army. The latter was necessary to stop attacks from Taiwan, to retake Tibet and to defend the frontiers. The PLA benefited from Soviet assistance during and after the Korean War, but which ceased after the 1959 Sino-Soviet split. Tactical and operational training in the PLA continued, despite the effects of the Great Famine into the 1960s, but training was severely constrained by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.⁶⁰⁵ The service academies were closed and the PLA became an internal security force, ensuring stability throughout the country.

Immediately after winning the Chinese Civil War, however, the PLA was not a mere internal security force but one of conquest in its takeover of Tibet. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, the forerunner to the People's Liberation Army, was involved in mountain warfare from its inception, including the Jiangxi Soviet, the Long March and its operations around Yan'an (as discussed in the previous chapter).⁶⁰⁶ Thus when the PLA moved into Tibet on 6 October 1949 it had some experience in operating at high altitudes. After a 10-day campaign the PLA had established control over the capital, Lhasa. They soon discovered that it is easier to control the cities but not the countryside.

605 . The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution will be referred to as the GPCR or Cultural Revolution, for brevity where appropriate.

606 . For the Jiangxi period see, Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, passim.

The poor infrastructure in Tibet and the PLA's rudimentary logistics capability, exacerbated by the Korean War and the provision of aid to the Viet Minh in their anti-colonial war in Indo-China, saw the Chinese have major problems re-supplying their forces in Tibet. Foraging from the local populace, as was the practice of the Red Army in the 1930s and 1940s, was not possible. The Chinese soldiers were unable to accustom themselves to the Tibetan diet of yak meat, barley, tea and butter.⁶⁰⁷ Due to severe weather conditions, air supply was sporadic and operations by the PLA had to cease during the winter months. The rugged terrain, across which artillery had to be manhandled, meant the Tibetan guerrillas could move out of range before they were subjected to fire from the artillery. Caves, hides and valleys, where available, provided cover when the weather enabled the PLA to employ aircraft.

While Tibet posed hardships, this was not a time for the People's Liberation Army to feel forsaken. In the period between 1950 and 1953 the Soviet Army supplied 3,642 advisors and specialists to help the PLA. By 1966 this number reached 6,695 personnel comprising 68 general officers, 6,033 officers, 208 short-service soldiers and 386 civilian workers.⁶⁰⁸ During the same period the Soviet Union provided training in its military establishments to 1,514 Chinese service personnel. This is broken down to 97 from the ground forces, 178 from the Air Defence Forces, 466 Air Force personnel, 608 Naval personnel, 99 from the rear services and 66 personnel from other branches of the People's Liberation Army.⁶⁰⁹

607 . McNair-Wilson, A. 'Fall of the forbidden city: how Tibet was conquered by Chairman Mao's forces', *War in Peace*, Volume 2, Issue 15, 1983, op. cit., p. 299.

608 . 'Local Wars and Armed Conflicts in which Soviet and Russian Forces Have Participated: Military-Political and Military-Strategic Support to Local Wars and Armed Conflicts: In the Far East and Southeast Asia', in Pochtarev, A.N., Yarremenko, V.A. & Usikov, A.V. *Russia (USSR) in Local Wars and Regional Conflicts in the Second Half of the 20th Century*, Kuchkovo Polye Publishing, Moscow, 2000, p. 62.

609 . *Ibid.*

The Korean War

The initial period of Soviet military aid was also a time of another cross border involvement for the PLA: from looking east to the retaking of Tibet, Beijing turned its gaze west to events in Korea. China became involved in the Korean War with the People's Liberation Army being known as the 'Chinese People's Volunteers' (CPV). They came to the aid of the North Korean Army against United Nations Forces as they approached the Chinese border.

The People's Liberation Army divides the Korean War into four stages. The first stage is from 25 June to 14 September 1950, which is the Korean People's Army offensive against South Korea. The second stage is from 15 September to 25 November, and is the Korean People's Army retreat against the United Nations forces. The third stage, from 26 November 1950 to 31 January 1951, is the United Nations retreat after China's intervention. The fourth stage, spanning 1 February 1951 to 27 July 1953, is referred to as the 'stalemate'.

In the Korean War it was quickly discovered that the Chinese soldier was fit, had excellent field craft skills and could withstand hardship whilst relying on minimal logistic support. The 13th Army Corps commanders of the Chinese People's Volunteers wrote in a report dated late September 1950 that 'tactically [we] will employ our traditional methods such as concentration of [our] superior force [to attack weak enemy positions], penetration, circling and disintegration, close combat, night strikes and quick battles to force a solution'.⁶¹⁰ Attacks at night and over broken ground were the norm.⁶¹¹ Chinese soldiers would move quietly, infiltrate enemy positions and then use automatic fire from sub-machine gun positions to provide cover whilst throwing grenades at the enemy's flanks and rear.

610 . Shu Guang Zhang. *Mao's Military Romanticism*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1995, p. 77.

611 . Marshall, S.L.A. *Commentary on Infantry Weapons and Weapons Usage in Korea: Winter of 1950-51*, John Hopkins University, Maryland, 1951, p. 5; Australian Army General Staff. *Notes on the Chinese Communist Army*, Army Headquarters, Melbourne, 1951, pp. 33 & 34.

Highly trained crews provided the base of fire with heavy machine guns.⁶¹² Considerable numbers were pushed forward stealthily into the front line during the attack.⁶¹³ After one unsuccessful CPV battalion assault during the Chosin Reservoir Campaign, US Marines collected ten heavy and seven light machine guns, 12 Thompson sub-machine guns and 76 rifles.⁶¹⁴

By moving silently and ‘hugging’ United Nations’ positions, Chinese infantry negated the UN force’s artillery and air firepower advantage, unless UN commanders were prepared to accept ‘friendly fire’ casualties. CPV infantry defence against tanks initially consisted of satchel charges and ineffective grenade bundles,⁶¹⁵ but a precious few bazookas and recoilless rifles became available towards the end of the Korean War.

The United States Marine Corps were under no illusions as to CPV fighting capacity. Official reports after Chinese attacks on the First United States Marine Corps Division at Hagaru and Koto-ri noted that:

The attacking troops were well armed, well trained, well-equipped, and ably led. Ironically enough it was with US weapons that the Chinese were for the most part armed. These included 60 and 81 mm mortars, Thompson sub-machine guns, and heavy and light machine guns, most of which had been captured from Chinese Nationalist forces.⁶¹⁶

612 . Marshall, *op. cit.*, pp. 75 & 76

613 . *Ibid.*; Australian Army General Staff, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

614 . Montross, L. & Canzona, N.A. Based on Research by Bauer, K.J. *U.S. Marine Corps Operations in Korea 1950-1953 Volume III The Chosin Reservoir Campaign*, Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, Washington D.C., 1957, pp. 225 & 226.

615 . Satchel charges are cloth bags filled with high explosive with an attached fuze. Grenade bundles are grenades bound around a stick grenade to give a more powerful explosion.

616 . This was taken from Samuel B. Griffith II's *The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, McGraw - Hill, New York 1967, page 144 quoting from '1st Marine Division Special Action Report: Wonsan-Hamhung-Chosin, 8 October 1950-15 December 1950', *Historical Library, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps*, Washington, p. 29 & 30.

‘Hugging the enemy’ was the primary tactic in offensive operations against an adversary who held an advantage in firepower. The Chinese were disadvantaged in grenade throwing and the quality of their stick grenades (too light to be effective). This reduced their effectiveness in close combat actions, once UN forces had evaluated CPV tactics. ‘Hugging the enemy’ was also used by the Viet Minh against the French, the Viet Cong against United States forces in South Vietnam, the Mujahideen against Soviet forces in Afghanistan and Chechen forces fighting the Russians.⁶¹⁷

Chinese tactics were successful in the early days of their involvement in Korea until they met the United States Marine Corps.⁶¹⁸ The US First Marine Division used the fire team as its basic building block for its infantry, which it had developed from the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army. With elements of the US Army and British Royal Marine Commandos attached, the First Marine Division during its famous 11-day withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir fought and decimated seven Communist Chinese divisions.⁶¹⁹ In the period 26 October to 15 December 1950, a total of 50 days, the division destroyed four Chinese armies of 13 divisions for only 718 dead, 192 missing and 3,508 wounded. The USMC was fighting an enemy that was using the same structure, the big difference being that the Marines were better armed and equipped.

As the Korean War entered stalemate, both sides dug and conducted raids and limited actions reminiscent of the First World War. It became a battle of attrition in a series of small but significant and quite bloody battles. The People’s Liberation Army – or CPV as they were then - quickly became adept at organising in-depth defensive positions in Korea. They were stubborn and difficult to dislodge and were always improving their

617 . Sykholesskiy, A. ‘The Guerrilla’s Artillery: The RPG in Local Armed Conflicts’, *Soldat Udachi*, February 1996, p. 43. This is the seminal article on the employment of RPGs up to 1996 and is still relevant today.

618 . Koperts, *op. cit.*, p. 44; Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 & 39.

619 . Simmons, E.H. ‘Hell at Chosin’, *War in Peace*, Vol. 2, Issue 14, 1983, pp. 274 & 277.

defences, using trench works, tunnels and bunkers along ridgelines, mountain peaks and with mutually supporting fire. Bunkers were well constructed being usually made of double logs with one to two metre thick roofs of rock and could be three storeys deep.⁶²⁰ Deception measures were utilised and dummy positions were common.⁶²¹ Sniping by CPV forces in the Korean War started in early 1952 when the 230th Communist Youth League Regiment brought with them some 'special grade shooters'.⁶²² These were sharpshooters and not trained snipers but as the Chinese People's Volunteers referred to them as snipers, this is the term used in this thesis. They employed captured United States M-1 Garand semi-automatic rifles and Soviet Mosin-Nagant 1891-30 bolt-action rifles without telescopic sights.⁶²³ The maximum engagement range was between 400 and 500 metres with the average engagement range around 100 metres.⁶²⁴ Spread along the front and operating in teams of one to two men, one acting as an observer and the other the shooter, they killed or wounded 14 enemy soldiers for the expenditure of 29 rounds according to Chinese sources. Special ranges were built for their use, utilizing both fixed and disappearing targets.⁶²⁵

Operational Level Planning and Command and Control

The ability of the PLA to move the 13th Army Corps with its four infantry armies of 260,000 in often poor weather, with total strategic surprise, demonstrated the high quality

620 . Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 & 40; Marshall, *op. cit.*, pp. 51 & 52; Australian Army General Staff, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

621 . Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

622 . 'Da ni mei shangliang zhiyuanjie zai chaoxian zhangchangde lengqian leng pao huodang (shang)', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2002 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 180 Qi, pp. 49-52.

623 . *Ibid.*, p. 50

624 . *Ibid.*

625 . *Ibid.*

staff planning. The offensives, once underway, showed the two major problems the PLA faced in offensive operations in Korea. These were (1) the lack of command and control once the attack started and (2) the ability to sustain the troops logistically. In Korea runners were employed to relay orders as there was a lack of radio communication equipment – there were only two telephones per battalion.⁶²⁶

Logistics, despite excellent planning staff was woefully inadequate. Ill equipped to sustain operations in the harsh Korean winter, the Chinese operations ground to a halt due to an inability to supply enough rations and cold weather clothing.⁶²⁷ Ninety percent of the 26th Army Group became frostbite casualties, the 27th had 10,000 struck down with frostbite and the Ninth Army Group was rendered ineffective for three months during the winter of 1950.⁶²⁸ Similarly inadequate ammunition supply and heavy equipment like artillery meant the combat power of the PLA divisions was low. Despite tactical success the inherent low combat power of the PLA meant it was incapable of operational success. United Nations forces even when trapped could often still find a way out and be supplied if isolated.⁶²⁹

Poor roads, UN airpower and having fewer than 300 trucks for over 300,000 troops meant inadequate supplies for any CPV offensive, let alone keeping forces supplied with the basic requirements like cold weather clothing. UN aircraft had destroyed much of the in-theatre cold weather supplies and lack of motor transport meant that a rapid exploitation of a breakthrough in an offensive operation was not possible, and similarly, if there was a need to retreat, troops could be quickly enveloped. Chinese troops were accustomed to living off the land but this was not possible in Korea (like Tibet – but for

626 . Australian Army General Staff, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

627 . Shrader, C.R. *Communist Logistics in the Korean War*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1995, p. 174.

628 . *Ibid.*, Bin Yu. 'What China Learned from its "Forgotten War" in Korea', in Xiaobing, Millet & Bin Yu, *op. cit.*, p. 16

629 . *Ibid.*, pp. 15 – 17.

different reasons), as there was little spare food in the winter months, and in any case much of the crop had been destroyed. In the rugged terrain of Korea when the lines stabilised, by dermination and organisation rations were supplied to personnel in static positions so that the soldiers were now getting sufficient food to enable them to withstand the cold.⁶³⁰

Korea forced the PLA to learn how to sustain a force centrally and not by foraging. The best example is rationing, as in conflicts there is usually more than enough ammunition, but often a scarcity of food. The static conditions from mid-1951 allowed the logistics chain to be built up, the PLA to rebuild and replenish its units, and the soldiers to start receiving regular rations.

The normal peacetime standard for the PLA during that period was 1.2 kg per man comprising 900gm of rice or millet, 300gm of vegetables and 40gm of meat.⁶³¹ In Korea as the logistics chain improved so did the soldier's diet. In mid-1951 PLA soldiers in Korea were receiving rice, with or without millet with salt with little vegetables or meat; but by the Winter were receiving 1,000 gm of cereal with salt and small amounts of meat, vegetables and condiments. By the end of 1952 this had grown to 900gm of cereal and 670gm of meat, vegetables and oils and 180gm of condiments (for example, soy sauce, salt, spices).⁶³² The PLA had learned to keep an army supplied in the field.

By the end of the Korean War the PLA emerged as a force that had learnt how to master many of the technologies required in modern warfare. Artillery and armour were integrated into the PLA and, above all, the logistics required to maintain them was now available, if limited in scope. By the cessation of hostilities it was functioning under combat conditions without the benefit of air superiority, and had sufficient combat

630 . *Ibid.*, p. 27.

631 . Shrader, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

632 . *Ibid.*, pp. 94 & 95.

stockpiles to allow a 21-day offensive if required. The logistics lessons and operational planning and tactics that the People's Liberation Army learnt in Korea were used to provide assistance to the Viet Minh in Indo-China, in its own operations in Tibet, and the 1962 Sino-Indian Conflict.

Turning to the generational changes in the Chinese Communist soldier, it is notable that in 1937 the Chinese Communist soldier was hardy, travelled light, was involved in guerrilla warfare against the Japanese and building a base of operations amongst the peasants. He was little changed in 1950 at the squad level except in having more automatic weapons, and as with all armies, new weapons mean more to carry. In late 1937 he would carry a bolt-action rifle with 30 rounds of ammunition and three hand grenades.⁶³³ The average Chinese soldier who crossed the Yalu carried a rifle with 80 rounds of ammunition, five hand grenades, one or two mortar bombs or block TNT, and a few extra clips for sub-machine guns or light machine guns. For sustenance there were emergency rations of rice, tea and salt; and these were supposed to be supplemented from the Korean populace or captured rations.⁶³⁴ The heavy use of garlic in rations when the front stabilised, meant that United Nations soldiers could tell when Chinese soldiers were nearby or had been in an area as the smell could travel several hundred metres depending on the weather.⁶³⁵ A soldier in 1937 carried a tea and salt ration, a two-kilogram pack of millet flour, and would also have supplemented this with food from the peasants he lived amongst.⁶³⁶

Like his Red Army predecessors, the Chinese soldier who crossed the Yalu was superbly fit. One example is the forced march the 38th Army conducted on the night of 27-28 November 1950. It covered 72.5 kilometres in 14 hours to try and cut off the retreating

633 . Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

634 . English, 1984, *op. cit.*, pp. 169 & 170.

635 . Mahoney, K. *Formidable Enemies: The North Korean and Chinese Soldier in the Korean War*, Presidio Press, Novato, p. 34.

636 . Griffith, *loc. cit.*

United States Second Infantry Division.⁶³⁷ The average weight a CPV rifleman carried was 18.5 kg, which was half that of a US rifleman.⁶³⁸ The CPV infantryman's basic field equipment was: a one pint canteen; a mess kit of a rice bowl, chop sticks and cup; first aid kit; bandoleers for ammunition; and a small pouch for carrying his kit.⁶³⁹

Contrary to accepted wisdom, the Chinese soldier who crossed the Yalu was well armed and heavily equipped. On a small frame he was carrying a large amount of ammunition and his weapons, although of varied composition, he was not as bad off as many writers have commented upon.⁶⁴⁰ To simplify training and logistics, entire armies were armed with Japanese, United States or Chinese weapons.⁶⁴¹ The United Nations forces were no better. British Commonwealth and United States forces when working together had three different rifle calibres for four different types of rifles and carbines and four different types of sub-machine guns with two different types of ammunition. There were five different types of machine guns with two different calibres. Only the two different types of British rifles had interchangeable magazines, as did the Australian and British sub-machine guns.

PLA Operational Planning in Indo-China – The Lynch Pin of the Viet Minh's Success

Almost as soon as the Chinese Communist Party came to power they almost immediately offered assistance to the Viet Minh.⁶⁴² The Viet Minh was short of staff officers and the

637 . Bin Yu, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

638 . Shrader, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

639 . *Ibid.*, p. 95.

640 . Australian Army General Staff, Melbourne, *op. cit.*, p. 11; Thomas, *op. cit.*, p.36 & Department of the Army, *Handbook on the Chinese Communist Army*, Department of the Army, Washington D.C., 1952, pp. 23 & 105.

641 . Australian Army General Staff, Melbourne , *loc.cit.*

642 . Qiang Zhai. *China and the Vietnam Wars 1950-1975*, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2000, p.13.

PLA provided military advisors at the battalion, regiment and divisional levels under the auspices of the Chinese Military Advisory Group (CMAG). The CMAG also put the administration and financial systems of the Viet Minh on a sound footing. More importantly from a Communist view, they helped politicise the army and mobilise the masses. Finally, besides providing training they effectively took over the operational planning of the Viet Minh.⁶⁴³ From April to September 1950 China also supplied enough equipment to equip 16,000 soldiers and this included 14,000 rifles and pistols, 1,700 machine guns, 150 artillery pieces including mortars, 2,800 tons of grain and large amounts of ammunition, medicine, uniforms and communications equipment.⁶⁴⁴ These enabled the Viet Minh, under General Chen Geng of the PLA, to capture Cao Bang by mid-October, breaking the French blockade of the Vietnamese-Chinese border and destroying seven French battalions. General Chen Geng left in early November 1950 for the Korean War.⁶⁴⁵

French resistance stiffened with new tactics and bolstered with United States equipment. The CMAG suggested that the Viet Minh start to conduct guerrilla warfare behind the French lines whilst defending their base of Hoa Binh. This showed an appreciation of the operational level of planning that the French appeared to lack. The Viet Minh ceased their conventional attacks against French positions, which had proved costly, and accepted the Chinese strategy of clearing the French from northwest Vietnam and then attacking their flank via north Laos. Starting in mid-October 1952, this was successful by mid-December and in March 1953 the CMAG planned and assisted Viet Minh operations inside Laos, including providing advisors inside Laos itself.

In October 1953 General Wei Guoqing was appointed to lead the CMAG with Luo Guibo as his political adviser. Wei and the Viet Minh High Command in late October and late

643 . *Ibid.*, p.63.

644 . Chen Jian. 'China and the First Indo-China War, 1950-54', *China Quarterly*, No. 133, January-March 1993, p. 93.

645 . *Ibid.*, pp 93 & 94.

November planned the upcoming offensives that would see which was to launch a two pronged attack into Laos from the north, and through central Vietnam. The French decided to parachute forces into the village of Dien Bien Phu to act as a springboard to attack the Viet Minh and forestall attacks into northern Laos. The Viet Minh then started to encircle Dien Bien Phu, in the mountainous terrain surrounding it, using thousands of peasants as labourers to build roads and as porters to haul ammunition and artillery.⁶⁴⁶ This ability to plan and execute a logistics effort, which also needed the ability to feed and care for the construction workers and porters in an area that did not allow foraging, showed a high level of planning.

The French brought more troops in the airfields they had built, as the Viet Minh encircled it and by the end of December 1953 the French had 16 battalions in the area and Viet Minh had it under encirclement. The Viet Minh did not want for materiel as during the campaign it supplied 200 trucks, over 10,000 barrels of oil, over 100 artillery pieces including mortars, 3,000 small arms and 2.4 million rounds of small arms ammunition.

Operational planning initially was to try and take Dien Bien Phu with ‘human wave’ tactics, overwhelming the French defences in a quick assault in January before their defences were stronger. It was an abject failure; French defences were better than expected and led to a dispute between the Viet Minh High Command and their Chinese advisors. Although the CMAG’s appreciation of French defences and morale was poor, a quick victory would have changed the geopolitical situation in Indo-China much earlier. The CMAG suffered from its own lack of appreciation of the morale of the French forces as well. Many of the French soldiers were Foreign Legionnaires, battle-hardened veterans of the German SS who had fought on the Eastern Front in the Second World War.

The Chinese Military Committee of the Chinese Communist Party sent a directive to the CMAG on 24 January 1954 ‘to adopt a strategy of separating and encircling the enemy

646 . *Ibid.*, p. 101.

forces, and annihilate them bit by bit'.⁶⁴⁷ The Viet Minh and their Chinese advisors were to use conventional siege tactics and build up their forces before launching another assault. This was new to the PLA and drew heavily from their experiences in the Korean War. Operational planning for Dien Bien Phu was affected as much by external forces as on the battlefield. The Geneva conference on Korea and Indo-China was due in April and a major victory of French forces would give the Viet Minh a stronger hand at the negotiation table. Zhou Enlai instructed the CMAG to attack as quickly as possible and in consultation with the Viet Minh High Command attacked on 13 March 1954 at the northern end of the French defences.

Drawing on personnel who had fought in Korea, sniper instructors and 12 engineers were sent to assist the Viet Minh. The snipers taught the Viet Minh how to reduce French morale by keeping them on edge and the engineers instructed the Viet Minh on how to build trenches to approach the French defences unmolested.⁶⁴⁸ The Viet Minh built hundreds of miles of trench works before starting any more assaults. Four battalions of 37mm anti-aircraft guns were also supplied with training to stop the French supplying their beleaguered forces in Dien Bien Phu.⁶⁴⁹ The Chinese supplied the Viet Minh with modern artillery and multiple rocket launchers. The artillery were predominately ex-United States 105 mm howitzers, around 300 in all, captured from the Guomindang forces and the multiple rocket launchers were from the supplies the Soviet Union had given the Chinese during the Korean War.⁶⁵⁰ This artillery and its use were a strategic surprise to the French. More importantly, PLA regulars provided the crews and fire control coordination.⁶⁵¹ The experiences of Korea had given the PLA the capability to move, supply and coordinate massed artillery outside China. This capability was to be invaluable in future operations in Tibet and on the border with India.

647 . *Ibid.*

648 . Qiang, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

649 . *Ibid.*

650 . *Ibid.*, p. 49; Holmes, R. 'Dien Bien Phu', *War in Peace*, Vol. 2, No. 22, 1983, p. 393.

651 . Thompson, R. 'Master of War', *War In Peace*, Vol. 2, Iss.20, 1983, p. 399.

Equipment and Organisation of the PLA

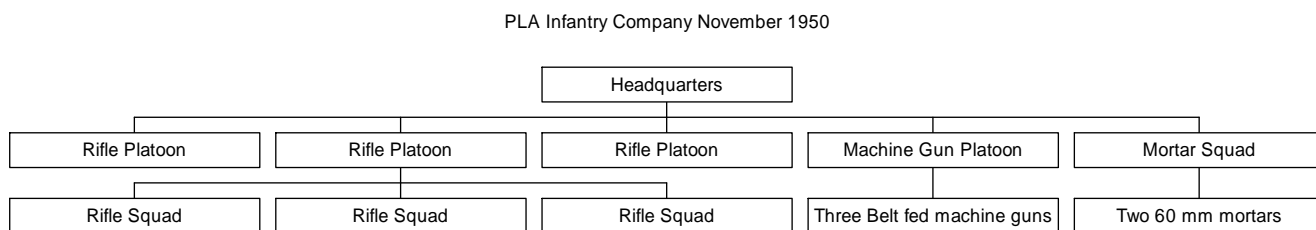
The People's Liberation Army has been criticized over the large number of different weapons and calibres it used. Many commentators referred to the plethora of weapons inherited from the Chinese Civil War. Given the amount of different types of weapons that the PLA had in 1949, this is understandable.⁶⁵² At the start of the Korean War, to simplify logistics and training, entire PLA armies were armed with Japanese weapons, United States weapons or ex-Guomindang weapons in 7.92 x 57 mm.⁶⁵³ Appendices Two and Three show a Soviet list of small arms used by the Chinese People's Volunteers in Korea which leaves out Chinese built ex-Guomindang arms. As the war continued, the Soviet Union supplied weapons to the PLA and this reflected in the increase in its firepower. Appendix Four shows how this occurred to the PLA and other protagonists in the Korean War.

The structure of the infantry company of the Chinese People's Volunteers that crossed the Yalu in November 1950 is shown in Figure One.

652 . Roberts, op. cit., p 42.

653 . Australian Army General Staff, Melbourne , *loc.cit.*

Figure One
PLA Infantry Company November 1950



Source: Author's compilation

The CPV units that faced the United States Marine Corps did not have the machine gun platoon and although the authorised strength was around 852 men for the battalion its actual strength was around 700 men.⁶⁵⁴ However there were belt fed machine guns available for use at the company level. After one assault the USMC captured 10 heavy machine guns, seven light machine guns, 12 Thompson sub-machine guns, 76 rifles, four pistols and 500 hand grenades.⁶⁵⁵ This shows that belt fed machine guns were pushed forward in an assault and were left after the repulse of the attack.

In October 1951 the PLA and CPV infantry company was reduced in size to three platoons and the 60 mm mortar squad. Each platoon had three squads of 12 men and the company strength was reduced from 190 to 151. This was based on the Soviet model, the result of losses sustained in Korea, plus the need to simplify administration. The previous light machine gun squad in the platoon was disbanded and the light machine guns became part of the three remaining rifle squads. With the influx of Soviet weapons the amount of automatic weapons was increased.⁶⁵⁶ The PLA and CPV infantry company was actually stronger in numbers and close-range firepower than its equivalent in the British Army.

⁶⁵⁴ . Montross & Canzona, *op. cit.*, p.87.

⁶⁵⁵ . *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁶⁵⁶ . Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

The CPV quickly found that this structure was clearly insufficient against the firepower of the United Nations in Korea and the infantry company was again restructured, more in line with that prevailing at the start of the Korean War. The infantry company commander needed to bring his support weapons with him as a lack of communications equipment meant he could rarely obtain on call artillery support in the defence and none during the attack. The People's Liberation Army and the Chinese People's Volunteer infantry company now became a self-contained task force. It was also a notably 'square organization' compared to the Soviet triangular model. It was comprised of three rifle platoons, one machine gun platoon and one rocket (bazooka) platoon. Each platoon was still comprised of three squads of 12 men, and the company's strength rose to 201.⁶⁵⁷ The battalion was now comprised of four rifle companies, one 82 mm mortar company, one heavy machine gun company, one recoilless rifle platoon and one communications platoon. The battalion at full strength had 1,068 officers and men.⁶⁵⁸ The 60mm mortars were removed as it was a defensive structure with landline communications to the rear enabling on-call fire support.

In the period 1950-1955 the Soviet Union supplied 67 regiments of armoured fighting vehicles which gave China the largest and most modern armoured force in Asia at the time. In 1950 the PLA's armoured force was composed of ex-Japanese and US light tanks, mostly M3 Stuarts. To bolster the PLA against threats from the United States and Taiwan, as well as to assist the Chinese People's Volunteers in Korea, the Soviet Union supplied over 3,000 armoured fighting vehicles.⁶⁵⁹ The advisors for the PLA armoured force were housed in Lushan, close to the Korean peninsula but far enough to avoid any conflict.

657 . *Ibid.*, p. 20.

658 . *Ibid.*

659 . 'Jie shifali zhujingbing ____ jianguo chuqi sujian bangzhu zhongguo fazhan zhuangjiabing', *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2007 Niandi, 1Qi, Zhongdi 251, pp. 40 - 42.

In 1950 the Soviet Union supplied 300 T-34-85s; 60 IS-2s and 40 ISU-122s which were enough for 10 regiments. Each regiment was composed of 30 T-34-85 medium tanks, six IS-2 heavy tanks and four ISU-122 tank destroyers.⁶⁶⁰

In 1951 Moscow supplied only 96 T-34-85s and 64 SU-76s which was enough for four regiments. As the PLA armoured training system got into gear, larger numbers of AFVs were supplied. In 1952, 312 T-34-85s and 208 SU-76s were supplied for 13 regiments and another 480 T-34-85s and 320 SU-76s were supplied in 1953 for a total of 40 regiments. To assist the logistics and battlefield mobility of China's armoured force, which was now becoming proficient in using armour, 72 armoured recovery vehicles and 60 engineering vehicles of all types were transferred from Soviet stocks to the PLA. This growing proficiency saw the armoured forces of the Chinese People's Volunteers in North Korea in the first six months of 1953 significantly increased. By the July 1953 armistice on the Korean peninsula, CPV armour in theatre was 278 T-34-85 medium tanks, 38 IS-2 heavy tanks, 27 ISU-122 and 48 SU-76 self-propelled guns for a total of 391 vehicles, sufficient for nine regiments.⁶⁶¹

In the period from 1954 to 1979 the PLA fought a border conflict with India, a counterinsurgency campaign against CIA sponsored rebels in Tibet, supplied personnel and equipment to North Vietnam to fight the United States, almost started a nuclear war with the Soviet Union, went through three major changes of doctrine, the upheaval of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and saw it suffer a defeat in a 'punitive' operation against the Vietnamese People's Army.

The People's Liberation Army identifies four major changes in their doctrine since the Korean War. In the 1950s it said its doctrine was to 'Protect the North (from the Soviet

660. Weathersby, K. "Should We Fear This?" *Stalin and the Danger of War with America*, Working Paper Number 39, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholar, Washington, D.C., 2002, p. 24.

661. Volkovskiy, N.L. & Petrova, I.V. (eds). *The War in Korea 1950-1953*, translated by Stephen L. Sewell, OOO Izdatel'stvo Poligon, Saint Petersburg 2000, pp. 319 & 320,.

Union) and Defend the South (Against the United States/Taiwan)'. In the 1960s this changed to 'Lure the Enemy Deep into the Country' in order to crush him with 'People's War'. In the 1970s, this became 'Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big', by using nuclear weapons, and this evolved from the late 1980s into the doctrine of Active Defence.⁶⁶² The People's Liberation Army's grand strategy and doctrine is 'active defence'. Active defence is based on three basic principles: no provocation of other nations; no bases anywhere on foreign soil; and no seizure of territory.⁶⁶³ The last principle must be tempered with the fact that the People's Republic of China lays claim to the entire South China Sea and controls Tibet by force.⁶⁶⁴ The Chinese intervention against United Nations Forces in the Korean War, and the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, are justified using this strategy. Although the PLA has described its doctrine as active defence, a 'strong lean defence force' is being made to enable it to perform their policy of active defence;⁶⁶⁵ an all arms force that can move anywhere it is required.

Sun Tzu wrote that 'all warfare is based on deception' and it may be argued People's War was conceptually constructed on this basis.⁶⁶⁶ It was a concept by Mao for mobilising the masses and reducing the perceived power of the PLA, in line with the dictum that, 'Power comes through the barrel of a gun, but the gun must always be under the control of the Party'.⁶⁶⁷ It was unpopular as far as regular People's Liberation Army units were concerned, and was dropped as soon as the Cultural Revolution was over. The current use in the PLA of Ready Reaction Forces (RRFs) or *Quantou Budhui* (fist units), dates

662 . Sewell, *op. cit.*; p. 3; See also Joffe, E. "'People's War under Modern Conditions": A Doctrine for Modern War', *China Quarterly*, No. 112, October-December 1987, pp. 551 – 571 *passim*.

663 . Sewell, *loc. cit.*

664 . Thomas, 1990, *op. cit.*, p. 1. With regards to holding Tibet by force the author believes this to be the case, China seized control by force, and does to this day.

665 . Sewell, *loc. cit.*

666 . This is observed in *Sun Tzu on the Art of War*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

667 . 'Zhan zheng he zhuan lue wen ti', *Mao Zedong xuan ji*, Volume 2, Ren minchu banshee, Beijing, p. 512.

from concepts developed in the early 1960s. Their development was disrupted due to the hiatus of the Cultural Revolution, and the idea of fully trained and equipped ready reaction forces was given renewed impetus after the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese debacle.⁶⁶⁸

At the operational level there was no People's War in the PLA and its operational art has been the same since the end of the Korean War. There were two conflicts that started in the 1950s and continued into the 1970s, and still have the ability to flare up into conflict: the Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet and the Sino-Indian border dispute. The small number of forces used in the conflict with India did not lend themselves to a show of the PLA's operational art whereas Tibet did.

Tibet 1954 – 1974: Fighting a Separatist Movement

There were two Tibetan uprisings against the Chinese, one in 1954 and the major uprising in Lhasa in March 1959. The latter saw the Dalai Lama flee to India with a small entourage. Both uprisings were crushed but guerrilla warfare by the Khampas continued until 1974.⁶⁶⁹

Kham Province in eastern Tibet was populated by Khampas, nomadic tribesmen who were fiercely independent, and from the start of the Chinese invasion were successful in attacking and defeating the People's Liberation Army. They conducted a guerrilla campaign in a region known for its harsh environment. The PLA fought on foot and the Khampas used native horses that gave them the mobility for hit and run raids. Ambushes of Chinese road convoys using the primitive winding roads were commonplace and were generally successful when mounted. During the initial invasion by the PLA, a 3,000-man

668 . Hereafter called the Cultural Revolution, its more common name.

669 . Brown, A. 'The dragon awakes', *War Monthly*, Volume 2, Issue 15, p. 290 and McNair -Wilson, A. 'Fall of the forbidden city', *War in Peace*, Volume 2, Issue 15, 1983, pp. 296 – 299; From notes taken during the *Cold War And Its Legacy in Tibet: Great-Power Politics and Regional Security*," seminar held at Harvard University on 20-21 April 2002.

division sent to the mountains to try and cut off retreating Tibetan forces was ambushed and annihilated.⁶⁷⁰

The PLA started to expand the road network from the beginning of its invasion and the roads completed in 1956 enabled the PLA to amass 150,000 soldiers in eastern Tibet by the end of 1957. This included some elements of Hui Muslim cavalry who had been used with devastating effect against 1956 rebellions on the steppes of Amdo and in Kham.⁶⁷¹ PLA tactics, employing Korean War veterans and combat aircraft, by mid-1958 saw the Tibetan resistance forces in southern Tibet in disarray.

On 16 June 1958 these disparate Tibetan resistance groups formed the National Volunteer Defence Army (NVDA). The Central Intelligence Agency supplied the Tibetan rebels with training in the United States in radio equipment and modern weapons, including 57 and 75 mm recoilless rifles and 60 and 81 mm mortars as well as guerrilla tactics.⁶⁷² From July 1958 infantry weapons were air dropped to aid them in their war against the Chinese and originally were old British .303-inch bolt-action Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifles, which the Tibetan Army had been using since 1914, and modern British .303-inch Bren light machine guns. These weapons were in use by Pakistani and Indian forces so their origin could be denied. Later on when there were no pretences of who were supplying the weapons, United States supplied small arms like the semi-automatic M-1 Garand rifle along with heavier weapons.⁶⁷³ Chinese logistics convoys and depots started to come under increasing attacks and by early 1959 large parts of central Tibet were under NVDA control. The Chinese brought in aircraft to attack the NVDA forces,

670 . O'Ballance, E. *The Red Army of China*, Faber and Faber, London, 1962, p. 190.

671 . Conboy, K. and Morrison, J. *The CIA's Secret War in Tibet*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2002, p. 101.

672 . *Ibid.*

673 . Conboy and Morrison, p. 76; Knaus, J.K. *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival*, Public Affairs, New York, 1999, pp. 153, 220 & 221.

forcing to move as they had no anti-aircraft weapons.⁶⁷⁴ At one stage it was reckoned by US intelligence that due to the insurgency a full one quarter of the PLA's trucks were operating in Tibet.

The NVDA moved into the Mustang area of Nepal where they conducted operations into Tibet until 1974, when they disbanded. Such operations into Tibet were made in the summer when the mountains were passable and the possibility of frostbite less likely. The CIA made two more airdrops in 1962 and one in 1965, and afterwards supplying intelligence until 1969. After that the Tibetan resistance was on its own. The biggest intelligence coup for the CIA occurred in October 1961, when NVDA ambushed a Chinese convoy that included an assistant regimental commander. In his pouch were discovered over 1,600 classified documents including 29 issues of the *Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army*.⁶⁷⁵ These were secret reports meant for political cadres at the regimental level and were a boon to the United States intelligence services. They revealed the state of the PLA including problems with equipment, training and the Great Famine of 1958 - 1961. They were released to China researchers through the Library of Congress on 4 August 1963 and published in full by the Hoover Institution as *The Politics of the Red Army*.⁶⁷⁶

Operations in Tibet gave the PLA real life operational level logistic and combined operations planning and experience. This experience coupled with having to learn to conduct operations at high altitudes on China's periphery would have been invaluable in the planning of operations against the Indian military in the 1962 Sino-Indian War.

674 . Knaus, *op. cit.*, pp.152 & 153.

675 . *Ibid.*, p. 249.

676 . Cheng, *loc. cit.*

Sino-Indian Border Conflicts 1959 – 1962 and Training for War

In the second half of 1959 a series of clashes between Indian and Chinese troops broke out along the McMahon line separating India and Tibet. This occurred whilst an anti-Chinese rebellion was in progress in Tibet. On 25 August there was an armed clash between Indian and Chinese troops and the Indians were forced to withdraw from their outpost.⁶⁷⁷ On 21 October in the Kongha Pass area of Ladakh a further clash occurred that saw nine Indian soldiers killed and 10 captured.⁶⁷⁸ On 7 November 1959 Zhou Enlai proposed a mutual withdrawal of 20 kilometres from the McMahon Line in the east, and to the Line of Control – that is, the line up to which each country exercised actual control and which was not in dispute.⁶⁷⁹

The Chinese Army was suffering from the Great Famine, but when reading various issues of the *Bulletin of Activities*, selected units of the People's Liberation Army were being trained up to a high state of readiness.⁶⁸⁰ Even after comments like 'our Army units must be active like living dragons and tigers, full of energy and the spirit of revolution' were made, specialist training was still emphasised.⁶⁸¹ Lin Biao himself directed that 'military training must come first at all times', when referring to political and cultural activities as well as labour projects.⁶⁸² He further said this was due to the fact that the 'weapons of war nowadays are more complicated and hard to learn'; and later on in the same passage 'fighting has changed altogether, for the present and the past are not only just a little

677 . Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation, *China Quarterly*, No. 1, January-March 1960, p. 110.

678 . *Ibid.*, pp. 110 & 111.

679 . *Ibid.*, p. 111.

680 . Cheng, *op. cit.* p. 32.

681 . This is an example of Mao's 'man over machine' philosophy. 'Comrade Xiao Hua's talk to the telephone conference of the Administrative Council of the Military Affairs Commission on 30 December 1960', in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

682 . 'We must understand clearly the important changes made in the training of our army', in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

different but entirely different'.⁶⁸³ The meeting of the Military Affairs Commission on training held 20-26 January 1961 emphasised that for soldiers the program should be chiefly focussed on technical training, and that the problem of 'one speciality and many skills', was to be addressed by concentrating on their speciality. The summary included that 'more emphasis should be placed on specialisation than on general skill'.⁶⁸⁴ These comments tend to put into perspective the slogans of 'man over machine' and, as Joffe described, the 'better a red head than expert'.⁶⁸⁵

In 1961, a PLA Ground Force Training Conference was held on subject of the 'Implementation of the Policy of Compactness' as well as quality. The conference decided that there should be an overhaul of shooting training, including an emphasis on night shooting, and that dry practice of small arms training should be conducted daily.⁶⁸⁶ The sharpshooters of an infantry sub-unit were classified as superior marksmen and good marksmen in rifles, sub-machine guns, light machine guns and heavy machine guns. Fully equipped and full-strength company units were expected to have one or two superior marksmen in every squad, and the company units below full strength were expected to have 10 to 15 percent superior marksmen.⁶⁸⁷ There were no designated snipers as such.

Tensions continued along the McMahon Line and both China and India started testing each other's defences in July 1962. Clashes were initially confined to Ladakh, but by September they had also spread along the entire McMahon Line.⁶⁸⁸ The Chinese attacked on 20 October. On 22 October the Chinese Ministry of Defence said 'in order to

683 . *Ibid.*

684 . A Summary of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Military Affairs Commission on Military Training', in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

685 . For an explanation of the period see Joffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 13 to 17.

686 . Cheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 675 & 676.

687 . *Ibid.*, p. 683.

688 . Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation, *China Quarterly*, No. 12, October- December 1962, p. 256.

protect the Indian troops from staging a come back and launching fresh attacks, the Chinese frontier guards, fighting in self-defence, need no longer restrict themselves to the limits of the illegal McMahon Line'.⁶⁸⁹ The key towns of Walong (eastern NEFA) and Bondi La (western NEFA) fell on 17 November and 19 November, respectively; in the latter case the Chinese simply by-passed the Indian defence line along the Sela Ridge.⁶⁹⁰ At midnight 20-21 November the Chinese announced their troops would stop firing the following midnight and they would start withdrawing to positions 20 kilometres north of the McMahon Line. In the middle and Ladakh sectors of the frontier they would withdraw 20 km from the Line of Control as defined by them, that is, as at 7 November 1959.⁶⁹¹

The following is a translation on the use of recoilless rifles in the 1962 Sino-Indian War and describes the Indian defences as well as how the PLA, through skilful field craft and a 57mm recoilless rifle, overcame them:

In October 1962 our infantry from a regiment had the second battalion artillery company with 57mm recoilless rifles, with gun-team four subordinate to eight company which was deployed on the west side of the Qiangdeng region. In the Qiangdeng region the south face of the mountains sloped towards the north, and was covered in thick scrub. The Indian Army positions generally overlooked the slope and terrain. It was defended by the 10th company, from the ninth battalion, comprising around 130 soldiers. Well camouflaged they had constructed large scale defence works comprising 48 positions, in a dispersed hedgehog type defence overlooking the small fighting area.

689 . *Ibid.*, p. 255.

690 . Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation, *China Quarterly*, No. 13, January- March 1963, p. 259.

691 . *Ibid.*

The [Chinese] rear command post fully studied the terrain, and co-located with them was gun-team four with eight people carrying a Model 52 57mm recoilless rifle and 17 rounds of ammunition, which was subordinate to eight company and cooperated with them in the battle.

At 0745hours on 20 October, gun-team four, located with the headquarters advanced towards the enemy to assist eight company with the attack. Eight infantry company had encountered three enemy pillboxes whose firepower blocked their advance and was causing casualties. Gun-team four caught up and immediately established itself on a small ridge and began close fire support, hitting a bunker with the first shot at 60m.

Right afterwards the platoon ordered fire upon the left hand bunker, yet the target was obscured by heavy brush; hitting it ‘would defy the laws of shooting’. Gun-team four resolutely pushed forward 30m with the team and team leader utilising the terrain for cover, got within 40m to 50m downwards of the bunker. The team fired two rounds; each round destroyed a bunker making a breach in the defences which opened the road for the Chinese advance.⁶⁹²

The experiences of operating in Tibet and on the Indian border were unlikely to have been incorporated in the PLA operations planning as its staff colleges were closed during the Cultural Revolution. The lack of logistics planning and the loss of combined operations planning and experience became painfully obvious during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. Mao Zedong’s flirtation with his version of People’s War further eroded the capacity for operational planning in the PLA, compounded with the upheaval of the Cultural Revolution.

692 . Zhongguo fangmei wuhouzuolipao –52 shi 57mm, 58 shi 75mm wuhouzuolipao (shang)’, *Qingbingqi*, 2007 Niandi, 7 (shang) Qi, Zhongdi 250, pp. 28 – 31.

Infantry tactics - The Myth of People's War

While Mao Zedong and Lin Biao were advocating the benefits of People's War doctrine, the PLA in 1961 decided to recreate 'model' units.⁶⁹³ These were to be expanded into battalion level units and larger as time and money permitted - in military parlance, Ready Reaction Forces (RRFs). The use of model companies was first used in the early 1930s by the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, the forerunner of the People's Liberation Army, the Red Guards and Young Pioneers.⁶⁹⁴ These were an elite unit and used as a model for other units to aspire to.⁶⁹⁵ Model units were to be designated as 'The Company on Duty', the company being the primary combat unit of the PLA at the time, to avoid charges of 'elitism'.⁶⁹⁶ The units on duty were to be trained and fully equipped so they were capable of going into action on six hours' notice. Model companies were to be established in regiments in full-time or half-time training. These companies were to be fully manned and have the better equipment, and were to be the nucleus around which larger RRFs were to be formed as funding allowed.

Thus when People's War was gathering pace after the fall of Peng Dehuai, special forces and RRF units in the PLA were being fostered and encouraged. The bulk of the operational training budget of the PLA went to special forces subordinate to units at the divisional level and was meant to account for 70 percent of the local training time. For the 'special troops of units' at the regimental level and below, it was meant to account for

693 . 'Speech of Comrade Chien-ying at the Training Meeting of the Military Affairs Commission' in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

694 . Mao Zedong. 'A Secret Order on the Problem of Organizing Local Armed Forces (December 20, 1932)', in Schram, 1997, *op. cit.*, pp. 340 & 341; Mao Zedong. 'A Preliminary Summing Up of the Land Investigation Movement (August 1933)', in *ibid.*, p. 505.

695. *Ibid.*

696 . 'Endorsement by the Military Affairs Commission on the Problems of Military Training' in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 683.

60 percent of the total training time.⁶⁹⁷ Thus the bulk of training was going to the duty companies and reconnaissance units.

In the early 1960s the PLA based its combat manoeuvre and power around the infantry company.⁶⁹⁸ Its training regime was concentrated at the platoon and squad level, with the infantry company being the basic tactical unit. This meant it was also easier to create more RRF units as funding allowed. Platoons and companies were to have artillery, armour and flamethrowing units attached. Training at the battalion level and above was to be combined arms, and at the regimental level and above for command and control training.⁶⁹⁹ Due to funding constraints, training at the operational level was not emphasised, the emphasis being at the tactical and close combat levels.⁷⁰⁰

Quoting the relevant PLA document, the functions of the model company were to be:

- a. The role of being on duty. It can meet any sudden emergency and prevent any unforeseen situation;
- b. The role of experiment. It can test the new operational manuals for the infantry and study the usefulness of the organisation, equipment and techniques of our Army as well as new tactical requirements;
- c. The role of teaching. It can cultivate and train squad leaders; and

697 . 'A Summary of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Military Affairs Commission on Military Training (20-26 January 1961) in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

698 . 'Endorsement by the Military Affairs Commission on the Problems of Military Training' in Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 683.

699 . *Ibid.*

700 . *Ibid.*, p. 684.

- d. The role of the model example. It can set itself as a model example for the rest of the regiment.⁷⁰¹

A note of caution is in order here. What is regarded as normal in a well-trained infantry battalion can be regarded as special in another.⁷⁰² Many Western European military forces designate their light infantry units as elite units, whereas their tasks and roles are those that are normally expected of an Australian infantry battalion. For example there is a reconnaissance and surveillance platoon integral to the Australian infantry battalion.⁷⁰³

David Shambaugh observed that ‘in 1984, the PLA began to shrink the size of its operational commands, experimenting with brigade and battalion level forces instead of larger division sized forces and developing mobile and rapidly deployable ‘fist units’ (*quantou budhui*) on an experimental basis’.⁷⁰⁴ This is incorrect, as the PLA had already designated its first divisional sized RRF in 1983 based on its Airborne Force. The Airborne Force was the elite of the PLA, being equipped with the latest weapons and equipment, but like the German *Falschirmjäger* of the Second World War, was part of the air force. In 1983 it was the size of a PLA Army Corps and was the designated strategic reserve to reinforce the PLA on the borders, and was stationed at the Yingshan and Xiaogan airfields in the Wuhan Military Region.⁷⁰⁵ From there the PLA started to redevelop units inside each military region to act as rapid deployment or ‘fist’ units.

701 . ‘Speech of Comrade Chien-ying at the Training Meeting of the Military Affairs Commission’ *ibid.*, p. 251.

702 . I am indebted to Warrant Officer Class 2 Ian Kuring for pointing this out during discussions.

703 . Kuring, Ian. *Redcoats to Cams: A History of Australian Infantry 1788-2001*, Army History Unit, Canberra, 2004, pp. 484 & 507-511.

704 . Shambaugh, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

705 . ‘China’s Parachutists Conduct Reforms to Increase Combat Capability’, *Hong Kong Ming Bao*, 29 May 1983 cited in ‘Paratroop Reforms Said to Heighten PLA Capability’, *Foreign Military Broadcasting Service Daily Report: China*, Vol. I, No. 108, p. W1.

Thus the People's Liberation Army has been continuing the doctrine it was working on even during the start of People's War. People's War was never considered seriously and the focus on rapidly deployable forces, and combined forces which had started in 1961, simply resumed after the Cultural Revolution. In reality, there has been no change in doctrine, People's War was never close to the PLA's heart, a core of elite rapidly deployable forces was, and still is. In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s anti-armour weapons inside the infantry battalion were obsolete compared to the Western and Eastern Bloc and were not capable of defeating main battle tanks in a contemporary environment.⁷⁰⁶

During the period 1950 - 1979 the PLA's infantry regiments sorely lacked long-range anti-armour weapons, relying on small calibre recoilless rifles for stand-off attacks. During the Korean War and afterwards the PLA used a copy of the United States 3.75 inch M20 bazooka in the infantry company, and 57mm and 75mm recoilless rifles as the battalion and regiment level anti-armour weapons. In 1965 a Chinese copy of the Soviet 82 mm B-10 recoilless rifle, called the Type 65, was introduced to replace the 57 mm and 75 mm weapons with a more effective weapon. The major problem was that the effective range of the infantry regiment against armour was, at best, 450 metres.⁷⁰⁷

The Chinese tactic of 'hugging the enemy' also meant a reliance on close range anti-armour attack with anti-tank hand grenades and light anti-armour weapons like the RPG-2. In the mid-1950s the Soviet RPG-2 was produced by the Chinese as the Model 56 and replaced Chinese copies of the United States 2.36inch and 3.5inch rocket launchers used in the Korean War and afterwards. A Chinese version of the Soviet RKG-3 hollow charge anti-tank grenade was introduced to replace the vast assortment of improvised and old model anti-tank hand grenades and demolition charges that had also been used in Korea.⁷⁰⁸

706 . The situation is no better in contemporary PLA non-mechanized infantry units.

707 . Janzen, SC. 'The Story of the Rocket Propelled Grenade', *Red Thrust Star*, National Training Center, Fort Irwin, April 1997, p. 2.

708 . Department of the Army, *Handbook on the Chinese Communist Army*, Department of the Army, Washington D.C., 1952, pp. 48, 49 & 85-87; 'Zhongguo kangzhande qizhi shuoliudan daji', *Qingbingqi*, 2006 Niandi, 12Qi (shan), Zhongdi 236, pp. 13 - 15.

The RPG-2 was introduced into the People's Liberation Army as the Type 56 in the mid-1950s and gave the infantryman an effective, and lightweight, weapon out to 100 metres.⁷⁰⁹ The introduction of the Type 69 (RPG-7) rocket propelled grenade launcher increased this to 500 metres. The original PG-7 HEAT round for the RPG-7 was used in Vietnam, had a self-destruct fuse of 3.5 seconds initiated upon firing, and had a maximum range of approximately 950 metres against area targets and a maximum effective range against armour of approximately 500 metres.⁷¹⁰ The PG-7 warhead contained 0.3kg of cast TNT/RDX that gave it a useful capability against bunkers and personnel as well. During the Vietnam War, Army of the Republic of Vietnam figures showed that M-113 armoured personnel carriers had one penetration for every seven RPG hits. The hits themselves averaged one in eight to one in 10 rounds fired.⁷¹¹ The figures did not differentiate between the RPG -2 and RPG -7. The RPG -7 is more accurate so the hit rate would have been greater for that weapon. Statistical analysis showed that that only one M-113 was destroyed for every seven penetrations and casualties were 0.8 per penetration.⁷¹²

Other than rocket-propelled grenades, the individual infantryman had hollow charge anti-tank grenade and improvised bundle grenades to attack armour.⁷¹³ The Chinese soldier would remove the handles from their stick grenades and bind the heads around a complete stick grenade. This was originally employed by the Germans in the First World War where it was referred to as the *Geballte Ladung* and provided a large amount of explosive, but is not effective against main battle tanks. Still, these weapons were

709 . Lovi, A., Korenkov, V, Bazilevich, & Korablin, V. 'Russian Antitank Grenade Launchers', *Oruzhie*, Numbers 4 & 5., pp 1-60.

710 . *Ibid.*, p. 3.

711 . Dunstan, S. *Vietnam Tracks: Armour in Battle 1945-75*, Osprey Publishing, London, 1982, p. 59.

712 . *Ibid.*, pp. 59 & 114.

713 . Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

better than dynamite bundles on the end of poles as practised by the People's Militia (*Ming Bing*) in the 1960s and 1970s.⁷¹⁴ The individual PLA infantryman was using the same type of weapons, and close battle anti-armour tactics, as the German Army infantry had on the Eastern Front in 1941 and 1942.⁷¹⁵ When in 1979 China invaded Vietnam, the PLA was still using these weapons, their anti-armour weapons now two generations behind NATO and Warsaw Pact weapons, whose new generation of main battle tanks were coming into service equipped with composite armour.

When China attacked Vietnam in 1979 it lacked a direct fire anti-armour weapon in the infantry regiment that was effective past 500 metres, whereas infantry battalions in the Warsaw Pact and NATO could hit armour or other targets at 2,000 metres or more. The United States was putting the M47 Dragon and BGM71 TOW anti-tank guided weapons (ATGW) into service and European NATO forces had the Milan ATGW. The Vietnamese had Russian 9M14M *Malyutka* ('Sagger') anti-tank missiles with a range of 3,000 metres for its forces.⁷¹⁶ The first long-range anti-tank weapon was only just coming into service in the People's Liberation Army in 1979, when the *Malyutka* missile was copied as the *Hong Jian* (Red Arrow) – 73, although pre-production models could have been produced in 1978.⁷¹⁷

The PLA's Principles of War

714 . Bonds, R. *The Chinese War Machine*, Salamander Books, London, 1979, p. 101; Joffe, E. '“People's War under Modern Conditions”, A Doctrine for Modern War', *China Quarterly*, No. 112, December 1987, p. 557.

715 . Fleischer, W. *Panzerfaust and other German Infantry Anti-Tank Weapons*, Schiffer Military/Aviation History, Atglen, 1994, p. 15; Joffe, *loc. cit.*

716. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

717. Jencks, H. 'New Chinese Sagger', *Infantry*, Vol. 71, No. 1, January-February 1981, p. 12.

The People's Liberation Army had by now defined its Principles of War and these were.⁷¹⁸

1. political mobilisation
2. selection and maintenance of the aim
3. offensive action
4. concentration of force
5. initiative or flexibility
6. coordination
7. security
8. surprise
9. morale
10. freedom of action, and
11. mobility.

The PLA's Principles of War were similar to other nations and reflected its experiences; for example, political mobilisation was a PLA principle not found in the Soviet Union's, the United States' or Britain's contemporary principles. Interestingly, annihilation, which was in the Soviet Union's, was not included, especially giving the Red Army's emphasis on annihilation of the enemy. The previous Principle Number Nine – the use of captured weapons and personnel to supplement the PLA's own forces – was no longer in evidence. Perhaps this came under the PLA's principle of political mobilisation, which covered the need to control the Chinese populace and the PLA as well, as 'the gun must be under the control of the party'. Similarly, freedom of action was a principle which did not concur with the rigid Party command and control of the PLA. Mobility was given its own principle, reflecting the influence of Sun Tzu being an exponent of manoeuvre and the PLA putting a priority on manoeuvre due to its lack of heavy arms.

718. Starry, D.A. "The Principles of War", *Military Review*, Volume LXI, Number 9, September 1981, p. 6

The PLA in the period 1949-1979 depended on the militia for logistics and control of the population. Political cadres, besides being responsible for political mobilisation and education, also had an administrative and training role.

During the disastrous Great Leap Forward the *Ming Bing* (People's Army), generally referred to as the militia, was greatly expanded during the 'everyone a soldier' campaign and large resources devoted to it. This was done at the expense of the PLA who saw its precious few resources diverted away to campaign. There were considerable problems of corruption and some militias became local bandits, for example, in the Honan countryside.⁷¹⁹ They were referred to by such terms such as 'bandit kings', 'mad dogs', 'little bosses', 'living bandits' and 'tiger bandits'. In one county, 11 of the 13 heads of the departments of commune armed forces had committed 'seriously unlawful acts'. In the same county, 30 of 41 militia regimental commanders and 165 of the 224 militia battalions had also committed 'seriously unlawful acts'. Weapons control was lax, most of the militia units did not know how many they had and some were used in robberies. Some of the militia, besides robbing and beating people up, were also responsible for rape. Honan was not the only province that suffered from problems with the militia; Shaanxi province also had similar problems.⁷²⁰ The resources were gradually returned to the PLA in the early 1960s.

Turning to political cadres, as noted above, Mao Zedong famously wrote, 'Power comes through the barrel of a gun, but the gun must be under the control of the Party' (6 November 1938).⁷²¹ The role of the cadre system was to keep the army under its control and to ensure that the political activities of People's War were undertaken. The *Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army* revealed that the political cadre system was

719 . 'Report by Comrade Fu Ch'iu-Tao on the Inspection of Work of the Honan Militia', in Cheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-123.

720 . 'Brief Notes on Adjustment of the Work in Militia Organisations' in Cheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 385 - 392.

721 . Mao Zedong, 'On the question of war and strategy', in *Selected works of Mao Zedong*, Vol. 2, Beijing, 1969, p. 512.

not just used as a Party control system of the PLA. Political cadres were quite numerous and held positions of responsibility, including the deputy platoon leader position and his responsibility went down to the squad level.⁷²² Besides their political role, political cadres were also responsible for morale, welfare, discipline, the granting of leave, and ensuring that military directives were acted upon. Thus in Western military terms they acted as the equivalent of chaplains, naval coxswains, education officers, financial and training auditors, as well as their involvement in political education.⁷²³ Political officers were instructed to ensure that sub-specialisation on technical equipment occurred and to train a certain type of soldier to fight a certain type of war.⁷²⁴

A reading of the *Bulletin of Activities* shows that education and training were deemed highly important, with sixteen documents on these subjects in the *Bulletin*, compared to six on political activities.⁷²⁵ For example, the ‘Four sets of regulations on political work’ in company level units of the PLA were promulgated for enforcement. Committees were to be formed under the political officers with the company commander to reinforce the Party line through ‘democracy sessions’ and to organise and expand extra-curricular studies like mass physical, mass cultural and health activities. These were meant to increase morale, fitness, health and therefore fighting capability.⁷²⁶

Thus the responsibility of political officers for the PLA went beyond inculcating the correct political line. In the early days of the PLA they were often the only literate men in the lower ranks and part of their duties were to aid the Party by bringing literacy to the lower ranks. In an organisation that lacked formed education, training, and a personnel

722 . Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 675.

723 . In the Royal Australian Navy, coxswains are responsible for enforcing discipline as well as administering leave, often seen by many navy members anecdotally as open to favouritism by using the ability to stop leave by ‘losing’ leave applications.

724 . Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 328.

725 . Cheng, *op. cit.*, pp. 765 – 776.

726 . New China News Agency, 21 November 1961, in *Survey of China Mainland Press*, No. 2630, pp. 1-3.

administration system they were invaluable. Besides ensuring a standardised system and the quality assurance of training, they also kept in check provincialism - the bane of all previous Chinese armies. They may not have been popular but given the administration and education problems of the People's Liberation Army in its early days, political officers were necessary.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the 'Gang of Four' and Their Effects on the PLA, 1966-1976

The PLA became embroiled in the Cultural Revolution reducing its effectiveness and in some areas of China contributing to the turmoil. After Mao died in 1976 the 'Gang of Four' operating from Shanghai tried to make the militia its power base and reduce the power of the PLA. The following section will explain the GPCR's effects on the PLA and shed further light on the development of doctrine.

The Cultural Revolution severely affected the PLA; in many counties and provinces the Cultural Revolution became factionalised and went to war with itself.⁷²⁷ Red Guards were often allowed to raid armouries, and created havoc by fighting amongst themselves without interference from the PLA. In the period 1966 – 1968 rival Red Guard factions would often attack trains from the Soviet Union loaded with ordnance for North Vietnam. The attacks on these trains lead to Soviet accusations that China was blocking weapons shipments to North Vietnam.⁷²⁸ The PLA itself was not averse to interfering with Soviet arms shipments to Vietnam. Soviet MiG fighters for the Vietnamese People's Air Force were assembled and stored in Yunnan, where the United States could not hit them. The

727 . Xiaoxia Gong. 'The Logic of Repressive Collective Action: A Case Study of Violence in the Cultural Revolution', in Kam-ye Law. *The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered: Beyond Purge and Holocaust*, Pelgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, 2003, pp. 114 – 116.

728 . Qiang Zhai. *China and the Vietnam Wars 1950-1975*, University of California Press, 2000, pp. 150 & 151.

PLA would strip them for spare parts and replace them with Chinese made sub-standard worn out ones.⁷²⁹

Zhou Enlai, the Prime Minister and second only to Mao, held numerous meetings in Beijing with the feuding factions from Guangxi Autonomous Region to stop fighting, return the arms they seized and not block shipments to Vietnam. Eventually, in 1968, Zhou ordered the PLA to take control of China's railway network.⁷³⁰ Similarly the PLA could not sit idly by and watch the disintegration of law and order. Conservative elements of the PLA became a stabilising force in many areas, and after what appeared to be a descent into civil war in January and February 1968, started to take action with the blessing of many in the Politburo.⁷³¹ This was done with the same zeal that the Red Guards showed towards conservative elements and many radical Red Guard elements were killed, tortured and then sent to the periphery.⁷³²

In late 1967 Mao sent the PLA into the countryside to continue the Cultural Revolution but the PLA became the internal security force at the expense of its capability to fight a war.⁷³³ In April 1969 there were two million soldiers on 'political duties' – the euphemism for internal security duties.⁷³⁴ The operational capability was not totally destroyed and lessons of the Zhen Bao Island Incident caused most of the factions in the Politburo to change course and rebuild the war fighting capability of the PLA.⁷³⁵

729 . Private source.

730 . *Ibid.*, p. 151.

731 . Joffe, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Lupher, M. 'The Cultural Revolution and the Origins of Post-Mao Reform', in Kam-ye Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 192 & 193; Teiwes, F.C. & Sun, W. *The Tragedy of Lin Biao: Riding the Tiger During the Cultural Revolution 1966-1971*, Crawford House, Bathurst, 1996, pp. 72-79.

732 . Xiaoxia Gong, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

733 . Lupher, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

734 . Joffe, *loc. cit.*

735 . Teiwes & Sun, *op. cit.*, pp. 131 & 132.

From the start of the Cultural Revolution there was a purging of the ‘old guard’ in the PLA. This was not in itself not an unsound policy given their advanced ages. However it also caused confusion and fear in the hierarchy. It started with the purging of the PLA Chief of Staff, Luo Ruiqing, in late 1965 until the ill-fated flight of Lin Biao to the Soviet Union in 1971. Some of the military hierarchy purged were beaten, imprisoned and even killed, for example, Generals Gao Gang and Liu Shaoqi.

Following Peng Dehuai’s fall from grace in 1959 and the rise of the doctrine of People’s War, the People’s Militia became more active. The militia was to defeat the enemy with a ‘human wave’ after they had been ‘lured deep’ into the Chinese hinterland. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao’s wife Jiang Qing saw the People’s Militia as a counter to the People’s Liberation Army and aided its expansion. The Municipal Militia General Headquarters existed in Shanghai and Guangzhou, but PLA regional commanders outside of Shanghai and Guangzhou often gave it no more than ‘lip service’.⁷³⁶ After Mao died, Jiang and Zhang Chunqiao called on the masses to ‘learn from Shanghai and Militia Building’. They wanted to continue their ‘Leftist’ influence on the PLA whilst creating an alternative armed force to the PLA.⁷³⁷ However, the Gang of Four’s alternative power base to the PLA and Politburo was effectively without substance. After wresting power from Deng Xiaoping in early 1976, in the ensuing power struggle the Gang of Four was arrested in October that year which also confirmed the PLA’s control of the militia. Not even the Shanghai militia, the Gang of Four’s supposed power base, protested the arrest.⁷³⁸ Deng Xiaoping came to power in July 1977, supported by the PLA and conservative elements inside the Politburo.⁷³⁹

736 . *Ibid.*, p. 104.

737 . Ngok Lee. *China’s Defence Modernisation and Military Leadership*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1989, pp. 103 & 104.

738 . Joffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 87 & 88; Shambaugh, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

739 . *Ibid*; Spence & Chin, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

This ushered in the return of a non-politicised professional PLA. Leftist PLA commanders were replaced as quickly as practicable but this did take time and was still going on in the mid-1980s.⁷⁴⁰ More importantly, training again became focused on war fighting and not on guerrilla fighting. The military academies started to examine conventional war at the operational level but the loss of 10 years meant starting from what was remembered from 1965, putting the PLA at a decided disadvantage in comparison with its peers overseas. The lost decade resulted in the debacle of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War.

The Rise and Fall of People's War

The turmoil of the Cultural Revolution saw the higher-level training in the PLA cease and the standing army become a peacekeeping force that was more political in training than in combat. The experiences of operating in Tibet and on the Indian border were unlikely to have been incorporated in the PLA operations planning, as staff colleges were closed during the Cultural Revolution. The lack of logistics planning and the loss of combined operations planning and experience became painfully obvious during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. Two incidents in less than a decade revealed how far the PLA had fallen and were catalysts for doctrinal change. The first were the two 1969 Sino-Soviet border incidents and the second was the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War which exposed all the flaws of the PLA.

The Russian version is that on 2 March 1969, as had occurred for the previous two years, eight Soviet border guards met a demonstration on the disputed island of Damanskyi in the middle of the Ussuri River. Approximately 300 PLA personnel, disguised as civilians crossed the frozen river, and demonstrated proclaiming their support for Mao Zedong - waiving the Little Red Book - and against the Soviet 'social-imperialists'. What happened next was totally unexpected. The 'demonstrators' parted and a second group

740 . Joffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 155 - 157.

ambushed the Soviet border guards, killing them all. Other Soviet border guards counterattacked, a large fire fight ensued and when more reinforcements arrived, the Soviet border guards retook the island. The Soviets admitted to losing 31 dead and 14 wounded.⁷⁴¹ This is a high proportion of killed to wounded, over two-to-one so the fighting, and given that as only small arms were used, must have been at close range. The Chinese figures have never been announced. The area remained tense and on 15 March a PLA infantry regiment, supported by mortar and artillery fire, attacked the island again and forced the border guards to retreat.⁷⁴²

Both the Russians and Chinese agree the major action occurred on 15 March 1969. The Chinese version is that ‘on 15 March 1969 at 0802 hours a major conflict started at *Zhen Bao Dao* to defend China’. The Chinese claim the Soviet Army concentrated 200 infantry, 20 tanks and 30 armoured fighting vehicles, and mounted a surprise attack in depth of the combat area using artillery fire to cover the attack. The Chinese version is that the PLA soldiers ‘facing *Zhen Bao Dao* rose and launched a counter-strike damaging six infantry vehicles and 10 infantry soldiers and throwing them back’.⁷⁴³ The Russians say that their Border Guards were attacked and they fought back with small arms and the machine guns from their BTR-60PB wheeled armoured personnel carriers. Later a Russian counterattack led by four T-62s tried to get in behind the rear of the Chinese units on the island. They came under bombardment by Chinese artillery, the lead tank lost a track to an anti-tank mine on the ice, and the rest withdrew. The Chinese had placed Type 56 85mm anti-tank guns, which also have a high-explosive round, in direct support of their infantry.⁷⁴⁴ The attack faltered as Chinese artillery fire destroyed or disabled some of the APCs and a second assault was launched to rescue the survivors

741 . Gobarev, V.M. ‘Soviet Policy Toward China: Developing Nuclear Weapons 1949-1969’, *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 4, December 1999, pp. 43 & 44.

742 . *Ibid.*, p. 45.

743 . ‘Zhongguo fangmei wuhouzuolipao –52 shi 57mm, 58 shi 75mm wuhouzuolipao (shang)’, *loc.cit.*

744 . The high-explosive-fragmentation projectile weighed 9.6 kilograms. Foss, C.F. (ed) *Jane’s Armour and Artillery 1983-84*, *Jane’s Publishing*, London, 1983, pp. 595 & 639.

from the first one. The Soviet border guards did not leave their APCs, in accordance with prevailing Soviet doctrine for mechanized infantry. By this time the Chinese had constructed well-built defensive positions on the island.⁷⁴⁵

The Chinese Version accords with this:

At 0930 higher level ordered gun team seven squad leader Li and teams seven and eight to take along two Model 56 75mm recoilless rifles to the island and for gun team nine to carry a Model 56 75mm recoilless rifle and deploy it at number three gun position to guard against flank attacks against the main position at Zhen Bao Dao. Seven and eight fighter squads momentarily prepared the rear area, to become reserve position, when they got through as the river was frozen over at the fork. The force headed in the direction of the Zhen Bao Dao main position, as the Soviet Army had resolutely sent out four T-62 tanks. Approaching the southwest side of the fork in the river our main forces entrenched in the rear forcefully came forward.

As a result of the pressing threat teams seven and eight came but could not reach the gun or fill their ammunition needs but had the advantage of the terrain, so they prepared their hand grenades. The Soviet tanks advanced until 10 o'clock, where near the poplar forest, team-eight leader Li bravely having no regard for the enemy tanks' machine gun fire, bravely rose up and ran at the tanks continuously throwing five hand grenades. Positions two and three had little anti-tank firepower and the Soviet tank column continued fierce fire against them; they lacked the capability to pierce the turret armour.

745 . *Ibid.*; Ryabushkin, D.S. *Voyenno-Istoricheskaya Biblioteka: Mify Damanskogo*, OOO "AST" Publishing, Moscow 2004, pp. 163-172.

The T-62 turret armour could not be penetrated and the hull could only be pierced by the hollow charge rounds in the rear which were beyond reach. A combination of factors caused a unique situation where the crew abandoned a tank and were shot dead. A T-62 encountered a failed strike on its rear and as it attempted to turn around (our people ambushed the entire column because it was in a parallel group of the invasion), as it had not expected our forceful soldiers. Our forces long ago had set up an anti-tank minefield in which it was now located. It ran over a mine which exploded and broke the left side track. The three remaining tanks realising their situation, withdrew. The crew of the crippled tank tried to escape from the tank but were shot as they got out. One of our soldiers crawled up the tank body and threw a hand grenade down an open hatch. Afterwards the tank was retrieved and became part of the Chinese Revolutionary Vehicle Museum.

Watching the Soviet tanks arrive during their withdrawal, teams seven and eight immediately moved men forward in coordination with the defence of the main position. Team seven vigorously moved into an ambush position on the river embankment, only to discover on the left side of its position a tank and three armoured fighting vehicles coming towards the main position to cut it off with fire. Team seven swiftly got the recoilless rifle in to action, and opened fire on one of the armoured fighting vehicles. The first shot hit the target and the vehicle caught fire. Team seven immediately moved left, and upon arriving at its second firing position, saw enemy armoured fighting vehicles rushing towards it. Using the cover of the poplar forest the team coolly took aim along the track the vehicles were to take. The first shot was at 80m against an armoured fighting vehicle which was hit and exploded; the other one turned around and ran away.

In the poplar forest scouting conducted by the complete fighting squad chased [the AFV] up to a high place, striking the rear vehicle; this time the Soviet Army was forced to stop its intensive short duration strike. In the poplar forest an order was given to provide third position with many artillery rounds because a counterstrike against the Soviet forces was being planned. The Soviet Army had lost one armoured fighting vehicle and one T-62 tank but they exceeded themselves by crossing over the river to the east side. Using clumps of scrub for cover our forces moved forcefully forward; team seven immediately set up the recoilless rifle and fired from the poplar forest causing damage.

On the right hand side of three weapons striking back at the tank, they did not turn their heads to see the serious damage being caused by an enemy tank which fired round after round; providing mobile firepower from far away, the armoured fighting vehicles advancing with the tanks following. This time using fire and movement the tanks caused continual damage frontally and from the left side. At this critical moment team seven's recoilless rifle experienced a stoppage which they attempted to clear. The enemy force's tanks struck the emplacement in the poplar forest, thus dying a martyr's death. The enemy tanks immediately met misfortune from fire by our force's anti-tank weapons, the damned tanks no longer dared to continue the attack, became scared and turned around beating a hasty retreat.

The Soviet Army forces met with misfortune from our forces on each front that struck back immediately and began a fierce retreat; this time our reinforcements included heavy long-range artillery that immediately fired in depth upon the Soviet Army who no longer dared to attack fiercely the rear routes, and our forces broke away from direct contact. A military success, later team eight collected two destroyed armoured fighting vehicles.

On 15 March the entire area was a fierce battle with our forces brought into full play, and our powerful force of rocket propelled grenades and recoilless rifles caused the destruction or capture of six enemy armoured fighting vehicles and one tank – an excellent military success.⁷⁴⁶

This is true up to a point. The Chinese had established themselves on the western side of the island and at 1610 hours were poised to take the eastern side in a pincer movement. The border guards stopped the attack with artillery fire, but the Chinese were bringing up reinforcements via regimental reserves for one final assault to overrun the Soviet border guard's defences. The Soviets estimated that the Chinese 124th Infantry Regiment had been reinforced and contained between 4,500 and 5,000 soldiers. After resisting, the Chinese retreated back to their newly entrenched positions and then opened up with artillery on the newly captured Soviet positions.⁷⁴⁷

Unknown to the Chinese, the Soviets had brought up elements of their divisional artillery supplemented by a rocket battalion. The divisional artillery of the 135th Motorised Rifle Division consisted of the 378th Artillery Regiment less three batteries, with 24 M-30 122mm and; the 13th Independent Rocket Artillery less one battery, with 12 of the new BM-21 *Grad* launchers; both firing from concealed positions and an anti-tank battery with six T-12 100mm towed anti-tank guns. The Soviets had decided to retake the island by nightfall and at 1700 hours opened fire with 24 122mm howitzers and the two batteries of the then new BM-21 *Grad* multiple rocket launchers. At 1700 the artillery opened fire with the 122mm guns destroying the 85mm guns and mortars, the guns being plainly visible, and then fired upon the Chinese forces on the island itself. The *Grad* fired into what they thought was the PLA artillery position, but which was actually the infantry reserve, the Chinese only having 1,000 soldiers forward, and in 19.5 seconds,

746 . Zhongguo fangmei wuhouzuolipao –52 shi 57mm, 58 shi 75mm wuhouzuolipao (shang)', *loc.cit.*

747 . Riabushkin, D.S. & Pavliuk, V.D. 'Soviet Artillery in the Battles for Damanskii Island', *Journal of Slavic Studies*, Volume 20, Issue 1, 2007, pp. 122, 125 & 126.

480 rounds impacted into the position. Each round several thousand fragments and each launcher of 40 rocket tubes enabled an area of 3.5 hectares to be completely covered. The Soviet observers said it was as 'if the earth itself was on fire'. The Chinese never announced their casualty figures but Soviet signals intelligence estimated 600-800 were killed in the first salvo. The Soviets retook the island and despite three Chinese sub-unit counterattacks kept it; this effectively ended the Chinese incursion.⁷⁴⁸

During the conflict, under the cover of darkness, PLA soldiers entered the Soviet T-62 main battle tank that was disabled and obtained needed technology by acquiring the main gun stabilizer, the TSh2B-41 gun sight and the then new armour-piercing fin-stabilised discarding sabot (APFSDS) ammunition.⁷⁴⁹ There was a follow-up second engagement on 17 March when the Soviets attempted to retrieve, then sink, the T-62 marooned on the ice. Using the entire divisional artillery available, including 152mm howitzers, the Soviets fired a heavy barrage onto the remaining Chinese positions, to suppress them whilst Soviet soldiers attempted to retrieve the tank. As this was unsuccessful, the Soviets decided to sink the tank by breaking the ice around it. The tank sank only up to its turret. During the Soviet attempt to tow the tank out, four PLA ISU-122 tank destroyers attempted to move into a position to attack the Soviet soldiers but were detected by their artillery observers. The Soviet 152mm howitzers almost immediately hit their position with accurate fire; one blew up and a second caught alight, the other two withdrawing before they were destroyed too.⁷⁵⁰

Eventually on the night of 1-2 May, divers attached tow ropes from several large tractors which enabled the Chinese to salvage the tank within close proximity to the Soviets. The T-62 was subsequently displayed in the Revolutionary Military Museum in Beijing.⁷⁵¹

748 . *Ibid.*, pp. 125 & 126; Ryabushkin, *loc. cit.*

749 . Shumilin, S.Eh. *T-62 Soviet Main Battle Tank*, Agentsvo ATF, Khar'kov, 2001, p. 41; Baryatinskiy, M. *T-62 Medium Tank*, Armour Collection No. 2, Issue 53/2004, p. 22.

750 . Ryabushkin, & Pavliuk, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

751 . *Ibid.*, pp. 129 & 130; Shumilin, *loc. cit.*; Baryatinskiy, *loc. cit.*

Another incident occurred on 13 August 1969 at Lake Zhalanashkol, on the Kazakhstan/Chinese border. A Chinese infantry battalion with some vehicles and light artillery occupied a large deserted hill on the Soviet side of the border and built defensive positions to hold it. The Soviets sent an entire motor rifle regiment of three battalions to retake the area. After a frontal assault using infantry, the APCs could not climb the hills, the Chinese units were annihilated, but not without the Soviet infantry suffering severe losses.⁷⁵²

These small actions did not reveal a great deal about the operational art of the People's Liberation Army. It did show that their employment of artillery was incorrect, but the gunners should have not been at fault. The PLA was experienced in providing indirect fire support; on this occasion it was not used. The incidents revealed the Chinese soldiers still had high morale, being prepared to fight until the last man, and were still skilled in weapons and field engineering. The Chinese in these incidents could not match the firepower that Soviet forces could bring to bear. Further, their infantry anti-armour weapons were not capable of disabling a Soviet main battle tank except by chance.

The Soviet leadership quickly grew tired of the border incidents and let the Chinese leadership know, through third parties, that any more incidents would see Soviet nuclear strikes on Chinese nuclear facilities including the Lop Nor missile and nuclear testing range. This was no idle threat as the Soviet Strategic Air Force in the Far East and Strategic Missile units were put on combat alert.⁷⁵³

The Chinese leadership had discovered how weak People's War was in the face of nuclear weapons. The strategy of luring the enemy deep into China was no longer applicable against the Soviet Union. This led to the adoption of the strategy of 'Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big'. The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict exposed the flaws in this strategy and how far the capability of the People's Liberation Army had shrunk.

752. Gobarev, *op.cit.*, p. 46.

753. *Ibid.*

The Decline Exposed - The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese Conflict

On 5 March 1979 at 1430 hours, forces from the People's Liberation Army took Hill 413, southwest of Lang Son and the way was open to the Red River Delta and Hanoi. Four hours later the PLA announced it was withdrawing from Vietnam. Could the PLA have successfully continued the conflict and launched an armoured thrust against Hanoi if it had wished to? No. The PLA Air Force could not have gained air superiority and the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) forces would have been under the umbrella of Hanoi's formidable and battle hardened air defences. The rainy season was approaching, which would have crippled logistical support for any PLA forces in Vietnam. The PLA was incapable of extended operations outside its borders.

The People's Liberation Army had seriously underestimated the capability of the forces it went against. The Vietnamese Government relied on militia and territorial forces to blunt the PLA's attacks and had provided weapons training for people in the border areas in the months before the attack.⁷⁵⁴ These citizen soldiers (*dan quan*) were backed up by regional forces (*dia phunog quan*) and enabled five regular or main forces, Vietnamese Army divisions to be kept in the rear to protect Hanoi and to defeat any breakthrough.⁷⁵⁵ There were two principal areas in the conflict, Lao Cai and Lang Son, which is southeast of Cao Bang. The fighting around Lao Cai involved eight PLA infantry divisions while the fighting around Lang Song involved 11 PLA infantry divisions.⁷⁵⁶ Due to the terrain, PLA armour and trucks were forced to travel along the few mountainous roads, and if

754 . Kenny, H. *Vietnamese Perceptions of the 1979 War with China*, Center for Naval Analysis, Virginia, 1999, p. 14.

755 . *Ibid.*

756 . The PLA infantry divisions that attacked Lao Cai were the 11th, 12th, 14th, 31st, 32nd, 37th and the 39th. The 42nd, 28th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 54th, 55th, 121st, 125th, 126th, 127th and 164th Infantry Divisions attacked Lang Son. Linder, James B. & Gregor, S. James. 'The Chinese Communist air Force in the "Punitive" War Against Vietnam', *Air University Review*, Vol. XXXII, No. 6, September-October 1981, p. 72.

they went off the road were channelled into columns. The area around Lang Son had narrow roads with steep sides, many commanding heights and was not heavily vegetated, containing very little jungle. By employing local knowledge the Vietnamese militia using mortars, land mines and ambushes with rocket propelled grenades, took a large toll of invading PLA units.⁷⁵⁷ The Type 62 light tanks suffered severely from RPG hits due to the close nature of the terrain. In one engagement the advance group of a column of Chinese Model 62 light tanks ran into a well-camouflaged 100mm KS-19 anti-aircraft artillery position. Surprising the Chinese, the Vietnamese gunners turned their guns around and opened fire on their flank. The attackers had to withdraw with a large number of tanks destroyed.⁷⁵⁸

Chinese tactics above the company level had atrophied during the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese fought a battle of attrition that wore down the Vietnamese defences but suffered horrendous casualties in the process. If a company failed to secure an objective a battalion was sent in, and if it failed, a regiment was used.⁷⁵⁹ It demonstrated that morale amongst the PLA was still strong as they were prepared to suffer heavy casualties to achieve victory, even if their tactical ability was poor. After the capture of Lang Son the Chinese media started to comment on the forces against which they fought. The Chinese media announced that the Vietnamese equipment was not as good as the Chinese had thought, that some were about 15 years old, and among the soldiers some were old men.⁷⁶⁰ *Xinhua*, the Chinese news service, reported: 'In the pillboxes and bunkers around Lao Cai were large supplies of weapons, ammunition and rice, and most of the weapons and ammunition and all the rice came from China.'⁷⁶¹ The PLA also discovered that some of this Chinese made equipment was newer than that used by some of their

757 . Kenny, *loc.cit.*

758 . Karyakin, L.A. & Moiseyev, V.I. *Red Dragon: Military Technology and Armaments of China: Volume I – Tanks*, Otvaga.narod.ru, Saransk, 2003, p. 95.

759 . Kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

760 . Foreign Broadcasting Information Service – China-79-045 dated 6 March 1979

761 . Foreign Broadcasting Information Service – China-70-042 dated 5 March 1979, p. A11.

own units.⁷⁶² These comments and discoveries were in line with the Vietnamese use of militia and territorial forces. The Russian and American equipment, that the Vietnamese regarded as better than their Chinese equivalents, was kept in the rear.⁷⁶³ These included T-55, T-54, T-34-85 and PT-76 tanks and delivered from the Soviet Union after the ill-fated 1972 Spring offensive against South Vietnamese forces.⁷⁶⁴ The United States armoured vehicles were from the defeated Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and included M-41A3 light tanks and a myriad number of versions of M-113 armoured personnel carriers.⁷⁶⁵

Chinese militia units received prominence in the Chinese News media. It was reported that militia from Jinxi were used to move the wounded and transport munitions to the front, and that the militia of Nanpo commune removed mines laid by Vietnamese forces in China.⁷⁶⁶ Further, *Xinhua* reported militia men from China's border area, Napo County, Guangxi, repulsed three incursions from Vietnamese forces on 17, 24 and 27 February.⁷⁶⁷ On 6 March 1979, the day after Lang Son fell, Beijing announced that the Vietnamese Third Division at Lang Son, the 346th Division in the Lao Cai area and the 345th Division in Cao Bang Province, had been destroyed.

This is a translation of a militia mortar unit and its experiences fighting the Vietnamese who entered China to keep Chinese units tied down defending China, instead of fighting inside Vietnam.⁷⁶⁸ The translation keeps the flavour of the original.

762 . Mirsky, Jonathan. 'China's 1979 Invasion of Vietnam: A View from the Infantry, *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 126, No. 2, June 1981, p. 51.

763 . Kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

764 . Shumilin, *loc.cit.*

765 . Dunstan, *op.cit.*, p. 188.

766 . Foreign Broadcasting Information Service – China – 79-038 dated 1 March 1979, p. A13.

767 . Foreign Broadcasting Information Service – China-79-044 dated 2 March 1979

768 . 'Lujian qigongde 67shi 82mm pojipaou', *Qingbingqi*, 2007 Niandi, 6 (xia) Qi, Zhongdi 249, pp. 28 – 32.

On 17 February, Vietnamese self-defence forces counterattacks first began, and Vietnamese forces nearby got ready and planned to carry out an attack on our forces this area. On 22 February, Vietnamese 107mm rocket artillery and 122mm howitzer fire faced our Hills 480 and 544; our forces' fighting depended on defence works and the company beat back successive times Vietnamese forces which carried out repeated sustained bombardments over five hours. Right afterwards they launched an infantry attack on Hills 480 and 544 positions, our company relying on the defence works to continually beat back many Vietnamese attacks.

At 1800 hours, 23 February, the Ningming County factory militia mortar company of 42 men carrying six Model 67 82mm mortars came to assist and support the front. At 0300 hours, 24 February, the mortar company arrived at the joint headquarters and was given an order to occupy firing positions at Hill 626, at the rear of Hill 544 to provide support artillery, and prepare plans for fighters at the battle front. At 0730, 24 February 1979, Vietnamese arranged an artillery fire screen/cover in the downwards direction of Hill 480, on the southeast side, initiated a mortar company attack and immediately executed obstruction fire - firing 60 rounds to check the enemy and repulse them.

At 0830 hours the mortar company made its first move, occupying a fire position 150 metres northwest of Hill 480. It was discovered shortly after that 2500 metres from Hill 544's front, in a sign of things to come, a Vietnamese artillery position was located. The mortar company counterattacked, their first shots were near the centre, the second shot hit the target and, from then on, the Vietnamese artillery became mute. At 0940 our forces subjected the Vietnamese force to a fierce rapid bombardment on Hill 544. The artillery and mortar company positions moved, the mortar company moving for a second time, to an unnamed hill

east and occupied a position there. Contact with the forces on Hills 480 and 544 was continued.

In the afternoon at 1400 hours, the Vietnamese dispatched a platoon sized attack on Hill 480. Our mortar company continuously fired. Second Company reported the fire was 100 metres to the left, which the mortar company corrected, and the fifth salvo then hit the enemy group. Afterwards the mortar company had less than 100 remaining rounds to check the enemy and beat them back. The Vietnamese signals line was found and intercepted with the significant discovery that Vietnamese employ 'bright' extremely uplifting words in the report which said: 'encountered artillery fire; troops were forceful but did not get to a high place'. After this for nearly an hour Vietnamese forces were peaceful, making our forces inactive and our army calm. At 1800, the Vietnamese exploited our forces being at rest eating their meal. They attacked with artillery and machinegun fire, mounting a surprise attack concentrated against each company, projecting downwards, along the bank of Hill 480, simultaneously attacking from three roads. Our forces responded on the east hillside and our troops battled with bold spirits in their defence. Second Company, seeing imminent danger, ordered long-range artillery fire and resolutely summoned mortar fire upon itself. To guard against the enemy from the direction of Hill 544, close to the remaining forces, five close bombardment strikes were made on the east side and on our forces' original fighting trenches. This section of the hill received 90 rounds at about 10 metres wide, exceeding the enemy's bombardment and the close bombardment on the enemy entrenchments, was followed immediately by a Second Company fiercely counterattacking, recapturing the position.

At 0000 hours the fighters [PLA] in the centre position were directing the mortar company as enemy artillery struck 20 of the PLA fighters. Eight

hundred rounds were fired at the Vietnamese attack which followed; the Vietnamese were once again beaten back. From Signals Intelligence we learnt the news of a Vietnamese report - 'encounter with enemy mountain top in the dark, artillery and mortar fire kill and wound, [we] fail and are defeated'. They are dejected and angry at the words in the message [presumably the Vietnamese headquarters – *translator*].

Just before dawn on 25 February, the Chinese artillery company concentrated its firepower and overwhelmed the enemy rocket battery and 60 and 82mm mortar positions. Three rocket tubes [launchers] were destroyed and 16 enemy mortar and artillery men were killed. Vietnamese are not readily defeated and at 0800 accurate fire by our mortar company beat back two attacks. In the afternoon at 1600, our forces now reinforced, decide to counterattack the Vietnamese force which collapsed, leaving behind 70 dead in front of our positions. [The figures from Vietnamese dead is restricted to our front position, in reality the dead and wounded due to long-range fire would be larger than this, approximately 150-200]. This disaster diminished enemy morale and they hastily ran away. Vietnamese forces still inside the border were fired upon by the mortar company and the main force artillery platoon, the bursting rounds causing the enemy to take flight – bon voyage.

The Vietnamese force against Hills 480 and 544 were small groups who chop and changed their attacks due to the pounding on the many highways. Eight soldiers suffered equally, attacked immediately by artillery pounding fire meeting with misfortune by our artillery company, with our mortar company executing blocking fire. Artillery firepower cut off enemy routes of retreat, after they had stopped the enemy attacks. In the evening they were only utilising odd artillery in fire missions during the calm period, pounding the enemy who wandered around, and who were depleted of vigour and energy, having been destroyed. There were

two opportunities inside the border area where Vietnamese forces were found not capable of advancing nor withdrawing and returning. They were like a fly, caught by a sticky lure and no idea what to do.

Contrary to the myth that the Chinese lacked modern arms,⁷⁶⁹ the expansion of the Chinese defence industries during the Cultural Revolution had improved the combat power of the PLA. The infantry weapons and artillery had been standardised improving logistics and training. They carried RPGs and 7.62 mm and 12.7 mm machine guns with them, which along with the PLA's towed tube and rocket artillery in support, were on par with many nations.⁷⁷⁰ This equipment is still viable and in use by many nations today. The lack of anti-armour guided missiles was over-rated. If they had been available to the PLA their use in close quarter mountain fighting would have been marginal.

The Vietnamese did use main force units in action. There were tank battles between PAVN T-54 main battle tanks and PLA Type 59 main battle tanks, the latter a Chinese modification of T-54. The Chinese tanks, equipped with a laser rangefinder, had the advantage in combat as they enabled more accurate firing.⁷⁷¹ In the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War the following Chinese AFVs were employed - the Type 59 main battle tank, the Type 62 light tank, the Type 63 amphibious tank and the Type 63 armoured personnel carrier. The Model 62 light tanks were at the vanguard of the first PLA units to cross into Vietnam and were used for infantry support.⁷⁷²

769. For example, Get, J.D. 'PLA Lessons Learned in Vietnam', *Military Review*, July 1987, p. 26.

770. Keeny, *op. cit.*, p. 12.; Archer, D.H.R.(ed) *Jane's Infantry Weapons 1976*, Macdonald and Jane's Publishing, London, 1976, *passim* and; Foss, C.F. (ed) *Jane's Armour and Artillery 1983-84*, *Jane's Publishing*, London, 1983, *passim*.

771. Shumilin, S. Eh. The T-54/T-55 Soviet Main Battle Tank Part 2, Agentsvo, Khar'kov, 1998, p. 47.

772. 'Haoyu zhishijie runwu xiwusheng ____ 62shi qinxing tankede gaijin guocheng yutedian', *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2005 Niandi, 12 Qi, Zhongdi 238, p. 9.

The Vietnamese regional forces, which guarded the border, had mainly Second World War era T-34-85s.⁷⁷³ The Vietnamese T-35-85s, however were more than a match for thinly armoured Type 62 and 63 tanks which lacked any sort of fire suppression system, a deficiency noted by the PLA in its post conflict lessons learned.⁷⁷⁴

The structure of the PLA's armoured units was so tank heavy that it had trouble against Vietnamese infantry ambushes. Their armoured units had no organic infantry leaving them vulnerable to the type of tactics that the Vietnamese used. A PLA armoured battalion had three companies, each with three platoons of 10 tanks and a three tank headquarters. Three battalions made a regiment of around 100 tanks. Whether there were any PLA armoured divisions on the Vietnamese border in 1979 is doubtful. No armoured divisions have been identified although a large number of light tanks were certainly used. These would have been from independent armoured regiments as the bulk of China's heavy divisions were on the Soviet border and protecting Beijing.

By contrast, the PAVN had organic infantry throughout its armoured units. They had started to convert their armoured regiments into a brigade structure from 1973.⁷⁷⁵ A PAVN armoured brigade was a balanced unit that comprised five battalions with 114 tanks as well as a total of between 60 and 70 armoured personnel carriers.⁷⁷⁶ The brigade would also have contained some self propelled anti-aircraft artillery, including the ZSU-57/2 and the ZSU-23/4 *Shilka*; with the accompanying mechanized infantry having Soviet 9M14M Malyutka-M (Sagger) anti-tank guided weapons and Strela-2/Strela-2M (SA-7) man-portable surface-to-air missiles. Figure Two shows the organisation charts taken from my research.

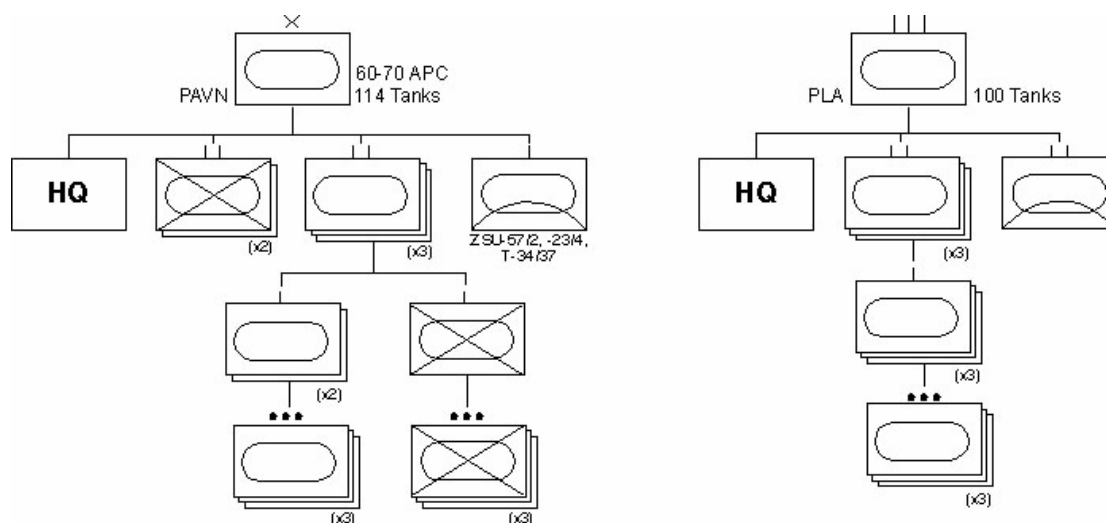
773 . Karyakin & Moiseyev, *loc.cit.*

774 . Wang, H. *ZTZ-98 Zhuzhan tanke zhuanji*, Inner Mongolia Cultural Publishing Company, Hailar, 2002, p. 52.

775 . Shumilin, *loc.cit.*

776 . Each tank battalion had a strength of 38 vehicles; each APC battalion consisted of between 30 to 35 vehicles. Grandolini, A. *Armor in the Vietnam W (2) Asian Forces*, Concord Publications, Hong Kong, 1998, p. 9.

Figure Two
PAVN and PLA Armour Units, 1979



PAVN and PLA Armor Units, 1979

Source: Grandolini, *op.cit.* pp. 10 & 11 & Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 279

Command and control was always poor in the PLA if the battlefield was fluid. Despite the introduction of Soviet systems there was little improvement in the 1950s. In 1961 the People's Liberation Army was having major problems with its communications. It still had a mixture of American, British, Japanese and Chinese made equipment. The Chinese equipment was criticised for being ill made, far too heavy, outdated and having poor sensitivity.⁷⁷⁷ The quality of Chinese manufactured batteries was so bad, that wartime batteries were better made. The ability of radio operators was under question as they

⁷⁷⁷ . Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 538.

could average only 60 to 70 characters per minute whereas in the past the average was from 100 to 120 characters per minute. Only one third of the signals staff could operate the equipment and there were very few especially quick technicians.⁷⁷⁸ Per minute message decoding and delivery speed had been much better in the past.⁷⁷⁹ The Special Signals Conference in March 1961 viewed this sorry state of affairs to be ‘inadequate in wartime’.⁷⁸⁰

Command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I) systems had always been a weak point with the PLA, and had been almost completely eroded due to the Cultural Revolution. The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese border war only highlighted this. The PLA troops that attacked Gao Bao Ling on the 10th day of the attack said that no air reconnaissance of the battlefield area had been made and the commanders were using Qing Dynasty maps from the 19th Century, encountering more than one false mountain top.⁷⁸¹ The use of poor maps was not confined to the PLA, the United States Ranger battalion that parachuted onto Port Salines in Grenada during the 1983 Operation Urgent Fury was ‘using a vaguely legible black and white photocopy of a British Ministry of Defence Overseas Deployment Map’.⁷⁸²

The PLA did show flair in providing secure radio real time communications during the conflict. Personnel from the Wenzhou region of China, who speak the unique regional Wenzhou dialect, were used to provide voice communications as the Vietnamese could not translate it. The United States Marine Corps in the South Pacific, during the Second World War, used Navajo Indian marines for the same reason. The Japanese were unable to translate their language. Unlike the United States marines during the Second World

778 . *Ibid.*, P. 537.

779 . *Ibid.*, p. 541.

780 . *Ibid.*, p. 537.

781 . Mirsky, op. cit., p. 49.

782 . Scales, R.H. *Certain Victory: The US Army in the Gulf War*, Office of the Chief of Staff, United States Army, Washington D.C., 1993, p. 29.

War, on-call artillery fire support was not available to the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army due to the inadequate communications equipment and doctrine. It was worse when the PLA soldiers needed aerial fire support, for despite having 124 attack aircraft and 24 medium and 82 light bombers in the area of operations, the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) was incapable of providing Battlefield Air Interdiction (BAI) and Close Air Support (CAIRS) to them.⁷⁸³

The communications systems were obsolete. The HF Model 63 radio transceiver, the first Chinese designed tactical radio was used at the company level and below. Its low output of 1.3 watts limited its range and its narrow bandwidth made it easy to jam.⁷⁸⁴ The Model 63 was in common use during the Sino-Vietnamese conflict and had problems due to the mountainous terrain.⁷⁸⁵ Radio communications in mountainous terrain plagued the Russians in Afghanistan and still cause problems in armies operating in similar terrain.⁷⁸⁶

The performance of the People's Liberation Army in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict was a shock to the Chinese Communist Party. Deng Xiaoping spoke to an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the CCP Central Committee's Military Commission on 12 March 1980. He stated that 'if there were stronger opponents, judging by our combat effectiveness, how good is its [our army's] reliability'.⁷⁸⁷ Deng outlined four areas that needed changing: 'cutting the fat', reform of the system, training and

783 . Linder & Gregor, *op. cit.*, pp. 69 & 72.

784. Bussert, J. 'China's C3I Efforts Show Progress', in *C3I Handbook*, EW Communications Inc, Palo Alto, 1986, p. 177.

785 . *Ibid.*

786 . Sray, J.E. *Mountain Warfare: the Russian Perspective*, Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, 1984, p.7; Grau L.W & Vázquez, H. *Ground Combat at High Altitude*, Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, 2002, p.5.

787 . Deng Xiaoping,. 'Streamline the Army and Raise Its Combat Effectiveness (12 March 1980)' cited in 'Deng on Raising Army's Combat Effectiveness', *Foreign Military Broadcasting Service Daily Report: China*, 26 July 1983, pp. K 2 –K7.

strengthening political and ideological work.⁷⁸⁸ He said that there were too many non-combatant personnel and headquarters personnel.⁷⁸⁹ The command and control system was bloated and needed streamlining. Deng also stated that senior personnel in command billets were too old, combined arms training was necessary and promotion was to be based on attendance at military academies.⁷⁹⁰ ‘Be both Red and Expert: Red should by no means be given up’, was a cornerstone of Deng’s reform in strengthening political and ideological work.⁷⁹¹

Deng announced that: ‘We will form composite armies, that is, all arms armies with all the different type of weapons integrated.’ Also: ‘Company and regimental commanders will learn how to have coordinated actions with the air . . . it is necessary to learn that, too.’ Deng further stated: ‘How to deal with tanks, aircraft, and so on . . . every fighter should learn about that.’⁷⁹² Thus the traditional emphasis on political indoctrination, close combat skills using hand grenades and the bayonet, stamina, night fighting and camouflage, passed down to the People’s Liberation Army from the Eighth Route Army was expanded,⁷⁹³ as new equipment was not yet available. Chinese military journals of the period reflected this whilst looking at the newer Western and Soviet systems.⁷⁹⁴ Creating a defence force able to deploy at short notice on China’s periphery, units capable of high-altitude warfare stationed in, and equipped for, operations at high altitudes, especially in Xinjiang Province.

788 . *Ibid.*, p. K 2.

789 . *Ibid.* pp., K3 - K5.

790 . *Ibid.* p., K6.

791 . *Ibid.* p., K7.

792 . *Ibid.*, p. K6.

793 . Griffith, *op. cit.*, p.225.

794 . Looking at *Bingqi Zhishi* from the period 1980 to 1990 reflects the changes in doctrine and weapons available to the PLA.

Organisational Changes in the PLA

The PLA at the end of the Korean War was on its way to reorganising itself as a modern balanced military force. Large amounts of Soviet aid provided more firepower to front line divisions and standardised PLA weaponry. An article in *Bingqi Zhishi* looked at the corps level organisation for the period under review. It should be noted that in the PLA organisation charts, mortars in 60 mm calibre and above are counted as artillery.

An army infantry group in 1959 contained 11 infantry battalions, and 31 other units within its structure with 271 pieces of artillery, 114 aircraft but only 22 tanks. This reflected the fact that the PLA still depended on the Soviet Union for the bulk of its equipment and that tanks were in short supply to support the infantry. These tanks could have been either the T-34-85 or the SU-76 self propelled guns.⁷⁹⁵

In 1973 a tank group in Hubei was comprised of 371 tanks, 385 pieces of artillery and 55 aircraft with a total of 21,000 personnel.⁷⁹⁶ The number of aircraft and tanks, whilst still small for a tank group at least had sufficient artillery. Against a Soviet motor rifle or tank division however it was inadequately equipped.

In the 1960s and 1970s the PLA had eight different types of divisions, although some were divisions in name only and were no larger than brigades. They did not stray from the 1954 reorganisation but as the Cultural Revolution progressed, and armament production increased, were brought up to similar equipment standards which increased their interoperability and firepower. In 1980, the number of divisions in the PLA was: between 118-125 infantry, 9-12 armoured, three cavalry, three airborne, 20-25 border guard, approximately 50 internal security and garrison, and 40 artillery divisions of all

795 . 'Jiefungjun zhongda yanxi huigu', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2004 Niandi, 9 Qi, Zhongdi 203, pp. 38 - 40.

796 . *Ibid.*

types. To this must be added the approximately 110 independent regiments of various types, such as the Type 62 light tank regiments in Southwest China.⁷⁹⁷

The infantry division was, and still is, the primary division of the PLA. In 1980 there were between 118-125 infantry divisions, each of three infantry regiments of three battalions each, and an artillery regiment with a total of 12 160/120mm mortars, 18 field guns of 100mm or 76mm, 12 122mm howitzers, a multiple rocket launcher battalion of 18 107mm rocket launchers and an anti-aircraft artillery battalion of 12 twin 14.5mm machine guns and 18 37/57mm automatic cannon. There was an armoured regiment comprising an armoured battalion of 31 Type 59 main battle tanks, a company of 10 assault guns and a reconnaissance platoon of three vehicles. The assault guns would generally be SU-76s but the elite front line divisions would have had the remnants of the SU-100, ISU-122 and ISU-152 assault guns from the 1950s.

There were between nine and 12 armoured divisions composed of three armoured and one mechanized infantry regiments, with the armoured regiment as described earlier. There were four reconnaissance vehicles attached to the regimental headquarters and a reconnaissance company of 10 vehicles attached to the divisional headquarters. The divisional artillery and anti-aircraft units were the same as in the infantry division and the mechanized regiment was composed of 100 Type 63 armoured personnel carriers in three battalions. Supporting weapons were few in the mechanized infantry regiment and there were no assault guns or self-propelled guns or multiple rocket launchers, although the First Armoured Divisions was equipped with Type 70 self-propelled 130mm multiple rocket launchers. As noted above the armoured division lacked sufficient infantry and had no self propelled artillery, anti-aircraft guns or surface-to-air missiles to fight on the modern battlefield.

797 . The figures for this section are taken from Patrick, S.P. 'The China War Sino-Soviet Conflict in the 1980s', *Strategy and Tactics*, Number 76, September/October 1979, pp. 4 – 14. The figures match those collated from other independent sources.

The cavalry divisions were used in Xinjiang and Mongolia and there were three airborne divisions which were part of the People's Liberation Army Air Force, which had few aircraft capable of dropping them by parachute. The infantry regiments were equipped to Class C scales and the divisional assets included a reconnaissance company, an anti-aircraft battery of three twin 14.5mm machine guns and five 37mm anti-aircraft guns and a mortar company with nine 120mm mortars to provide fire support.

The anti-aircraft and anti-tank divisions were brigades in size and the artillery division was comprised of a small regiment of anti-aircraft artillery, a regiment of medium and heavy artillery and a multiple rocket launcher regiment. The border and security divisions had three large battalions on Class C scales of equipment with only six 12.7mm machine guns, and three 122mm and either 76mm or 85mm field pieces. There were no logistics units inside the divisions; the militia and reserve units were tasked with the role of providing logistic support in the event of conflict. This was to cost the PLA dearly. The organisation of the units had not changed since the end of the Korean War whereas other countries had reorganised their forces for fluid combined operations.

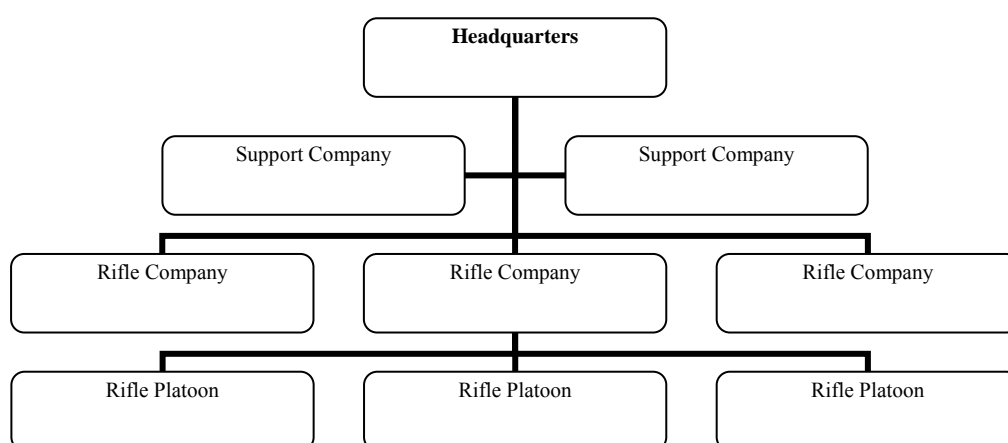
In May 1954 the PLA reorganised the infantry into three different types of regiments. Designated in the West as the class A, B and C they were equipped to different scales for different missions. The class A regiment was designed for conventional operations and the division had medium artillery whilst the class B and C divisions were on light scales with only light 76.2 mm artillery and 120 mm mortars. The class B battalion was equipped to the same standard as the class A whereas the class C battalion, being for use in jungle, mountainous terrain and paddy areas, had lighter weapons. Each class A regiment in addition to the battalion weapons, had a company each of 120 mm mortars, 75 mm recoilless rifles, 76.2 mm light artillery, and a 12.7 mm anti-aircraft machine gun platoon, each with six weapons. The class B regiment was similar, but the class C regiment had one 82 mm mortar company with nine mortars and a 75 mm recoilless rifle company with six weapons.⁷⁹⁸ The cautionary note of the Chinese overstating the size

798 . Cheng Mien-chih. 'The Organization and Equipment of the Chinese Communist Infantry', *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 10, July 1967, pp. 18-25

of their units needs to be remembered. Up until the 1980s, that which Western and Soviet Bloc militaries would have designated a platoon, the PLA often referred to as a company.

In May 1954 the People's Liberation Army went back to the triangular system of organisation for the infantry battalion. This is shown in Figure Three:

Figure Three
1954 PLA Infantry Battalion



Source: Compiled from Cheng, *op. cit.*

This new structure neglected the hard won lessons they had learnt from the recently ended Korean War. Again, acting on Soviet advice it was a retrograde step. In a four company structure battalion, if one company is rendered ineffective due to enemy action, the battalion is still viable. In a three company structure the loss of one company renders the battalion ineffective as it loses too much front line fighting strength.

In the class A battalion there was a heavy machine gun company with nine 7.62 x 54 mm machine guns and a mortar company with nine 82 mm mortars. This was one mortar tube and heavy machine gun per platoon. The class B battalion differed in having a recoilless rifle platoon at the battalion level composed of three squads with two 57 mm recoilless rifles each. The class A battalion only had one squad with two recoilless rifles,

probably for headquarters protection. The class C battalion was more like a Western infantry battalion. At the battalion level there was a fire support company having one 82 mm mortar platoon with six mortars, one heavy machine gun platoon with six machine guns and one recoilless rifle platoon with six Type 52 57 mm recoilless rifles. The class B and C battalions had extra recoilless rifles to compensate for the lack of divisional artillery.⁷⁹⁹

All three infantry battalions were equipped with three infantry companies, with each company being composed of three rifle platoons. The class A and B companies had a 60 mm mortar squad of two mortars and a machine gun platoon of three belt fed 7.62 x 54 mm belt fed weapons attached to the company. The class C company lost the machine gun squad and its squads were composed of nine men, compared to the class A and B companies which had 12 men per squad.⁸⁰⁰

The Great Famine of 1958 – 1961 saw the PLA suffer from a manpower shortage. In 1961 a PLA infantry was composed of only two squads per platoon as opposed to the usual three.⁸⁰¹ Each rifle squad had one light machine gun and was split into two five-man teams.⁸⁰² The heavy machine gun platoon, in reality only a section, had two five-man squads each with one company machine gun.⁸⁰³ An infantry soldier's combat load was 20.5 kg but the combat load for a member of the machine gun platoon was up to 27 kg. This could be up to 50 per cent of a soldier's body weight and was deemed excessive.⁸⁰⁴

799. *Ibid.*

800. *Ibid.*

801. Cheng, C.J. *op.cit.*, p. 283.

802. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

803. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

804. *Ibid.*

In 1979 the organization of the infantry units that crossed into Vietnam was little changed from the ones that were involved against Indian forces in 1961. In 1979, at the start of the Sino-Vietnamese conflict, a typical PLA infantry squad comprised 12 soldiers equipped with one Model 56 (RPD) light machine gun, 11 Model 56 (AK47) assault rifles both which used the 7.62 x 39mm M43 round and one Model 69 (RPG 7) anti-armour rocket launcher.⁸⁰⁵ The Model 69 RPG launcher has an effective range against stationary armour of 500 metres against the 150 metres for the Model 56. The rocket propelled grenade launcher and light machine gun, each require two-man teams to be effective, and with the commander this left seven riflemen in the squad. This structure was more in line with the structure of the British and German Armies of the time. However the squad was different in that there were always three teams of the same size in the squad, as opposed the Australian Army infantry section of the time, which had a scout, machine gun and rifle group of differing sizes.

Equipping the Army

As the influx of Soviet weapons were absorbed into the People's Liberation Army during the Korean War and afterwards, many of the older weapons were cascaded down to the lower grade units and the militia.⁸⁰⁶ Some were also shipped to other communist groups such as the Viet Minh.⁸⁰⁷ Comments about the differing types of weapons in the PLA's arsenal continued until the late 1970s yet a simple explanation was available in 1963 from a translation of the Bulletin of Activities. Units were instructed to 'store up the necessary technical equipment for actual combat and use some antiquated ones such as old aircraft, artillery and guns which cannot be used for combat purposes but can be used

805 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

806 . Bonds, *op. cit.*, pp. 73, 80, 81, 88, 89, 101 & 104.

807 . From April to September 1950 the Viet Minh were supplied 14,000 rifles, 1,700 machine guns, around 150 pieces of artillery in various calibres and large amounts of ammunition and communications equipment. Chen Jian, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

for training purposes'.⁸⁰⁸ Many infantry weapons were converted to Soviet calibres to simplify logistics. For example, the PLA converted Zb 26 light machine guns from 7.92 x 57 mm to 7.62 x 39 mm which enabled them to also use Model 56 rifle magazines. As for keeping old weapons, the People's Liberation Army was not alone. The Australian Army used the Second World War Bren light machine gun until the late 1990s and used the Vickers machine gun, a modified Maxim, until well into the late 1980s.⁸⁰⁹ When the Australian Army reintroduced sniping in the mid-1970s it selected the Second World War vintage No.1 Mark III*HT (Aust) rifle using the in .303 inch Mk VII round introducing another calibre in to the infantry battalion.⁸¹⁰ The United States National Guard was still using Second World War M1 Garand rifles, M1918A2 Browning Automatic Rifles and load bearing equipment in 1970.⁸¹¹ The 12.7 mm Browning M2 heavy machine gun is still in production and the prototype of the weapon dates from 1918.⁸¹² The prototype of the 12.7 x 99 mm cartridge used in the United States Browning M2 heavy machine gun dates from May 1919 and is itself based on a 1917 German cartridge.⁸¹³

With the return to 'People's War' and the Cultural Revolution that followed, the emphasis was on 'man over machine' and minor infantry tactics. One offshoot of this was to finally standardise the equipment in the People's Liberation Army. The defence budget during the Cultural Revolution from 1965 to 1971 went up 10 percent per annum.⁸¹⁴ This increase in expenditure enabled the PLA, at the infantry regiment level and below, to receive new equipment and standardising their weapons. Defence

808 . Cheng, *op. cit.*, p. 640.

809 . Kuring, I. *Infantry Weapons Briefing Notes for Display in Canberra for the 100th Anniversary of the Australian Army – 10-12 March 2001*, Infantry Museum, Singleton.

810 . *Ibid.*, p. 8.

811 . Rottman, G. *U.S. Army Combat Equipments 1910-1988*, (Men-at-arms series; 205), Osprey, London, 1989, p. 40.

812 . Smith, W.H.B. & Smith, J.E. *Small Arms of the World*, Stackpole, Harrisburg, 1973, p. 119.

813 . Hackley, F.W., Woodin, W.H. & Scranton, E.L. *History of Modern U.S. Military Small Arms Ammunition Volume I 1880-1939*, Macmillan, New York, 1967, p. 229.

814 . Joffe, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

expenditures continued to rise prior to the Sino-Vietnamese War; the increase from 1976 onwards was 10.78 percent in 1977, 12.64 percent in 1978 and 33.87 percent in 1979. The latter included the expenditure for the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict with the defence expenditure decreasing in the period 1980 to 1982.⁸¹⁵

Camouflage uniforms were introduced, one incorporating an integral hood having been available to the Chinese infantry from at least the early 1970s.⁸¹⁶ During this period the Chinese also developed a light machine gun that used a 101 round drum magazine and Model 56 magazines.⁸¹⁷ The Model 74 compared favourably in weight and length with the contemporary M-249 Minimi and the recent shortened variant of the Minimi.⁸¹⁸ It was not a success as it had an accuracy problem that was never rectified. As the Model 74 warmed up during firing, its point of aim changed and the accuracy suffered so much that it was never put into production.⁸¹⁹

With regard to PLA armour, in 1954 another 480 T-34-85s and 320 SU-76s were supplied again for a total of 40 regiments. The following year the force was given heavier vehicles which were more able to take on modern western armour. As well as 169 T-34-85s for attrition, there were a further 22 IS-2s, 99 SU-100 and 67 ISU-152s. This was rounded off with nine armoured recovery vehicles, including two heavy models

815 . Lee, N. *China's Defence Modernisation and Military Leadership*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1989, p. 7.

816 . Archer, DHR (ed). *Jane's Infantry Weapons 1976*, Macdonalds and Janes, London, 1976, p. 165.

817 . 'NORINCO 7.62 mm Type 74 light machine gun', *Jane's Infantry Weapons 2000-2001 CD-ROM*, Jane's Publishing Service, Surrey, 2000.

818 .	Type 74	6.4 kg empty	1.108 mm overall length	101 round magazine
	M-249 Minimi	7.1 kg empty	1.040 mm overall length	100 and 200 round link magazines
	Minimi SPW	5.7 kg empty	908 mm overall length, butt extended 774 mm length, butt compacted	Same as M-249

819. Li Geng, 'A Brief Introduction to China's Machine Guns', *Binqi Zhishi*, 3/1997, March, p. 23

for the ISU series armoured fighting vehicles. It is interesting to note that China never built an assault gun and no self-propelled artillery until the 122mm Model 70 self-propelled gun in the late 1960s/early 1970s.

On the question of main battle tanks, these were of Soviet origin. With the introduction of the T-54 and T-55 the Soviet Union was able to divest itself of 3,128 obsolescent AFVs and to support a communist partner. These AFVs formed the bulk of the PLA's armoured forces into the 1960s until Chinese production of the Type 59 and Type 62 was able to be started. The breaking of relations between the Soviet Union and China in 1959-1960 left the PLA with no ready source of modern armoured vehicles although the plans of the T-55 had been supplied. This led to the creation of an indigenous armoured vehicle industry that continues to this day, the T-54A being produced as the Type 59. China's isolation meant that all its main battle tanks were product improved versions of the T-55, and this only changed in the mid-1990s. To be fair, the lineage of the US 1970's M60A3, including the Israeli *Magach* conversions, starts with the 1945 T-26 Pershing designed to fight German Panther and Tiger tanks. To aid battlefield recovery the PLA introduced the type 64 armoured recovery vehicle (ARV) which was little more than the Type 59 with the turret removed and plated over.⁸²⁰ It was equipped with a block and tackle and steel wire for towing; and an upgraded version with a jib to remove engine blocks was developed in the late 1960s. Introduced as the Type 70, it was still obsolete compared to other ARVs in service around the world.

The Chinese Defence Industry scaled down the Type 59 main battle tank to create a vehicle suitable for operations in areas where main battle tanks had trouble operating due to poor road networks and the geography, such as extensive paddy fields, jungle and mountain roads. This became the Type 62 (WZ131) which was a well balanced light tank as good as its contemporaries. In 1967 the PLA decided the Type 62 light tank needed updating as the 85mm gun was starting to show its age. The improved tank was

820 . 'Xiandai zhanchang shangde "dadaoshen" _____ zhongguo yan zhihua zhuangbeide jikuantanke qiangjie qianyinche', *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang*, 2005 Niandi, 1 Qi, Zhongdi 227, pp. 10 – 14.

designated the WZ131-1 and the project had a long history resulting in various upgrades that eventually led no where.⁸²¹ One upgrade was the addition of skirts over the tracks, and bar armour around the rear arc and sides of the turret to detonate High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) rounds before hitting the turret. In Chinese, this is translated as ‘improved screen added outfit cannon tower bars’.⁸²² They do, however, act as a repository for tank hunting teams to throw and hang explosive charges where they will sit against the sides of the turret.

A laser rangefinder was added to the top of the mantle to improve accuracy and at the same time, to improve the survivability of the commander in close battle; a 12.7mm machine gun turret from the Model 63 APC was added to the commander’s cupola. Similar in shape to the 12.7mm machine gun turret used on the M-113 ACAV, this copied the US Army in the Vietnam War where crews often added the ACAV turret to various AFVs.⁸²³ This increased their firepower in the event of close-in attacks by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces by increasing the survivability of the gunner. This was the reason behind adding of the Type 63 machine gun turret to the Type 62. It was not introduced into service as it added 479 mm to the profile of the tank and the experience of the Israeli Army in the 1973 Yom Kippur War provided a cautionary lesson: tank commanders were decapitated when the machine gun turrets atop their M48 and M60s were shot off in combat.

Some of the Type 62 light tanks in PLA service have been modified with a laser rangefinder and a bank of four smoke grenade launchers in armoured mounts added to both sides of the turret. The Type 62 has a combat weight of 19.86 tonnes, four crew and had an overall length with the barrel forward of 8.016 metres, a width of 2.994 metres with its side skirts, a height of 2.742 metres to the top of the machine gun turret and

821 . ‘Haoyu zhishijie runwu xiwusheng ____ 62shi qinxing tankede gaijin guocheng yutedian’, *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2005 Niandi, 12 Qi, Zhongdi 238, pp. 5- 10.

822 . *Ibid.*, p. 9.

823 . Icks, Robert J. *Modern US Armored Support Vehicles*, Profile Publications, Windsor, 1971, p. 14; Dunstan, Simon. *Vietnam Tracks*, Osprey, London, pp. 105 – 107 & 125.

2.263 metres without the turret. Its 316 kilowatt diesel engine gave it a maximum speed of 60 kilometres per hour and a maximum range of between 400 and 450 kilometres. A mid-life update also saw improved ammunition storage rise to 62 rounds of 85mm ammunition onboard compared to 46 before the refit Type 62. Three thousand rounds of 7.62 mm machine gun ammunition are carried and 825 rounds of 12.7mm machine gun rounds compared to 300 in the earlier configuration.

In the 1970s the most modern ARV in service was the Type 70, based on the Type 62 light tank for use by forces using that vehicle. It incorporates a crane on the right hand side, dozer blade and purpose built compartments for recovery equipment. The Type 70 is 6.64 metres long overall, has a width of 2.39 metres and a height of 2.49 metres and is armed with a Model 54 12.7 mm machine gun. It was the PLA's first modern ARV and the model design for all after it.

The PLA tried to find a replacement for the Type 62 light tank during the Cultural Revolution with the ill-starred WZ 132 light tank.⁸²⁴ The history of the WZ132 can be broken into three parts or phases; phase 1 from 1967 – 1969, phase 2 from 1970 – 1972 and phase 3 from 1973 – 1975. It went from a simple project competing with the upgraded Model 62 (WZ131-1) to almost an entirely new design. The first design used solid road wheels similar to those on the Model 63 amphibious tank and had a long barrelled 76.2 mm gun with a pepper box muzzle brake, making it look similar to Taiwan's Type 64 light tank, itself a copy of the US M41 Walker Bulldog light tank. The next version of the WZ132 used the standard 85 mm gun. The capture of the then new Soviet T-62 main battle tank during the Zhen Bao Dao/Damanskyi Island Incident gave Chinese armour designers access to the latest Soviet technology including the 115 mm UTS-5 smoothbore gun and its APFSDS ammunition. To enable the vehicle to engage modern Western main battle tanks (MBTs) equipped with the 105 mm gun, a 100 mm smoothbore gun was installed in 1970 with the gun also being tried on the Type 59 MBT.

824 . 'Dao shi wuqing que youqing ____ zhongguo WZ132 qingxing tankede gaiyanshi guo chengyu tedian', *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2006 Niandi, 1Qi, Zhongdi 239, pp. 5 – 10.

The diesel motor incorporated a supercharger, using compressed air to give the tank a speed boost in combat. The WZ132's 405 kilowatt diesel engine gave it an impressive power to weight ratio of 18 kilowatts per tonne and could climb 45 degree slope. Its maximum range was 500 kilometres and unlike the Type 62 it was amphibious, being able to travel a maximum of 6.84 km/hr in the water. The WZ132 design was finalised in 1973 but languished until its cancellation in 1975. It was decided to upgrade the Type 62 using parts of the WZ132 design instead, likely due to the dismal combat performance of light armoured combat vehicles like the BMP-1, or lack of it, during the Yom Kippur War. Light tanks could not compete on the modern battlefield and resources were needed for other projects rather than another light tank.

The final version of the WZ132 had a combat weight of 22.5 tonnes, a hull length of 6.049 metres, and an overall length with the gun forward of 8.528 metres. It was 2.92 metres wide, 2.121 metres high at the cupola and besides the 100 mm gun, was equipped with a 12.7 mm machine gun on the turret roof and two 7.62 mm machine guns in the turret. It could carry 41 rounds of 100 mm, 500 rounds of 12.7 mm and 2,400 rounds of 7.62 mm machine gun ammunition.

The PLA's Type 63 was a Chinese development of the PT-76 and it produced a viable amphibious tank that was the mainstay of the PLAN Marine Corps for many years. It is also known as the WZ211-1 and the ZTS63.⁸²⁵ Weighing 18.4 tonnes, it had an overall length of 8.435 metres with the hull being 7.15metres. It was 3.2 metres wide and 2.522 metres high with its 294kilowatt diesel engine giving the tank a top speed of 64 kilometres per hour on roads and a maximum speed in water of 12 kilometres per hour. It could travel a maximum road range of 370 kilometres and 120 kilometres in water as it used water jets for movement.

825 . 'Shuizhong jiaolong yi zhongguo 63 shi shuilu tanke', *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang*, 2005 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 228, pp. 11 – 15.

The turret mounted an 85mm gun with a fume extractor near the end of the barrel, a coaxial 7.62 mm machine gun and the ubiquitous Model 54 12.7 mm machine gun on the turret roof. It carried 47 rounds for the main gun, 500 rounds for the 12.7 mm machine gun and 2,000 7.62 mm rounds for the coaxial machine gun. The Type 63 had a crew of four and the turret crew would have been small in stature as the turret is narrow.

As to armoured personnel carriers, the PLA's first indigenous tracked AFV was the Type 58-72.⁸²⁶ This was the prototype for the YW531, also known as the WZA531, which became the Type 63. The outward similarity between the prototype and production models can be measured in millimetres. The Type 58-72 had an overall length of 5.26 metres, a width of 2.8 metres and a height of 2.8 metres. It weighed 12.6 tonnes combat ready, had a crew of two and carried 12 soldiers in the rear and was armed with the ubiquitous Type 54 12.7mm machine gun. Its 261 horsepower diesel engine gave the vehicle a top on-road speed of 62 kilometres per hour and 47 kilometres per hour cross country with a maximum range of 500 kilometres.

The early model of the Type 63 pintle mounted a 7.62mm SG 43 machine gun including its Sokolov shield from the Model 1910 Maxim. The Type 63 was 5.476 metres long, 2.978 metres wide and 1.887 metres high at the top of the hull and 2.563 metres high with its Type 59 12.7mm machine gun. It was designed for two crew and 13 soldiers and had a fighting weight of 12.5 tonnes. Its 191 kilowatt diesel engine has 55 kilopascals of torque and gives the Type 63 a top road speed of 60 kilometres per hour and 6 kilometres per hour in water. It has a maximum road range of 500 kilometres and 61 kilometres in water and enabled the PLA to move a section of two groups, one with a Type 69 (RPG-7) RPG and the other with a Type 56 (RPD) light machine gun. If four-man fire teams are carried it could carry three with a section commander.

826 . 'Zhonghua diyi zhuangjiache zhongchan 58-72 ludai shi zhuangjia shusongche', *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang*, 2005 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 234, pp. 5 – 9.

Turning to the Type 70-1 (WZ303) self-propelled multiple rocket (MRL) launcher,⁸²⁷ it used a semi-retractable 19 round launcher with two rows of tubes, ten on top and nine directly underneath. It fired the H212 rocket from point blank to a maximum range of 10,115 metres, the launcher having an elevation from 0° to 50° and could move in an arc of 180°. The launcher was mounted to the Type 63 armoured personnel carrier hull with 19 rounds in the launcher and a further 20 ready use rounds in the hull. The vehicle took 120 seconds to prepare to fire and 80 seconds to move after firing. There was a crew of six and the vehicle had a 193 kilowatt diesel engine and a torque of 58.9 kilopascals that gave the vehicle a maximum road speed of 57.5 kilometres per hour and 5.2 kilometres per hour in water. The maximum range on road is 500 kilometres and 60 kilometres in water. The vehicle was 5.476 metres long, 2.978 metres wide and a travelling height (launcher retracted) of 2.625 metres. The PLA's First Armoured Division Type 70 130mm self-propelled multiple rocket launchers were used during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict.⁸²⁸

Except for the addition of an external armoured laser range finder to a small amount of Type 59 main battle tanks, this was the standard main battle tank in the PLA at the start of the Sino-Vietnamese War. Thus as the United States Army was about to introduce the M1 Abrams, the British Army the Challenger I, and the Soviet Union the T-80 main battle tanks, the PLA was still equipped with a tank at least two generations behind in technology.

Weapons for Operational Manoeuvre: The Development of Armoured Vehicles during the Cultural Revolution

The traditional view of the Cultural Revolution is that research and development on new Chinese vehicles became moribund. Yet this thinking on the PLA needs to change.

827 . 'Tiejia zhanshen zai nuhuo (xia) ___ guochan zixing liudanpao he zixing huojianpao', *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2006 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 246, pp. 5 - 10.

828 . *Ibid.*

During this period the Chinese defence industry developed a tank that became the test bed for new ideas – A Chinese MBT-70. It was developing weapons for operational level manoeuvre by professional forces, not the mobilised masses. However the PLA had a history of producing designs that failed, absorbing resources that could be better employed. In 1966, Luo Ruiqing, the PLA's then chief-of-staff criticised the defence industry because it was concentrating on R&D rather than on production.⁸²⁹ He was accused in the official *Report of Luo's Mistakes* that, 'he still frantically attacked our national defence scientific research work as going from data to data, from design to design, without completing anything'.⁸³⁰ Luo believed China was in danger of imminent war with the United States, and advocated Soviet assistance. His criticism of the Chinese defence industry could well have applied into the 1990s.

Using parts taken from Soviet T-62 main battle tank captured in the Zhen Bao/Damanskyi Island incident, the Chinese defence industry developed the WZ 1224 tank.⁸³¹ The vehicle hull appeared similar to the US/German MBT-70, mounted a turret with a wedged shape face. The wedge acted as spaced armour, similar to the Leopard 1A4 but was of lower profile. It carried a 120 mm smooth bore gun, had an overall length of 9.9 metres and a fighting weight of 45 tonnes. Its original V-8 engine produced 650-680 horsepower. The WZ1224 turret was similar in size and shape to the British Challenger One, except for the wedge shaped face. Another version of the WZ 1224 was developed and designated the WZ 1226. This had the same weight and dimensions and was equipped with a smaller turret of traditional Soviet 'mushroom' shape. It also weighed the same as the WZ 1224 and had the same 120mm gun. It was later fitted with a V-12 1,000 horsepower engine. Neither vehicle went into production, the Type 80 being the first second generation tank to go into Chinese service in 1981.

829 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

830 . *Ibid.*

831 . The translated title of the article is 'Our Nation's First Developed Second Generation Tank' in 'Wuguo Zaoqi Yanzhede Erdai Tanke', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2003 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 189 Qi, pp. 24 - 26.

The Chinese defence industry during the Cultural Revolution also developed its first indigenously designed 8 x 8 wheeled armoured vehicle.⁸³² Designated the WZ 522-1, it was an eight-wheeled infantry fighting vehicle that was first trialled in 1971. It was designed for a crew of two and sixteen passengers. It was armed with a Type 59 12.7 mm heavy machine gun with 1,500 rounds in an open cupola. It measured 6.385 metres in length, 2.650 metres in width, 2.609 metres in height and had a ground clearance of .478 metres. Its design weight was 10 tonnes and its 150 horsepower engine gave a power to weight ratio of 15:1. It had four firing ports on either side towards the rear of the hull and its maximum road speed was 80 kilometres per hour and in water 3.3 kilometres per hour. Its maximum range was quoted at 500 kilometres. Although trialled it never went into service.

Again demonstrating that armour development in China did not stagnate during the Cultural Revolution, design of the WZ141 was started in 1970 but the project was cancelled in 1980 after two different versions were built.⁸³³ Both versions were armed with two 105 mm recoilless rifles which were a direct copy of the United States M40 106 mm recoilless rifle with a launch rail for a *Hong Jian 73* anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) offset slightly on each barrel ahead of the breech.

With a fully loaded combat weight of 6.2 tonnes, the vehicle was 4.66 metres long by 2.44 metres wide by 1.86 metres high where crammed three crew, four HJ73 ATGM, 18 rounds of 105mm ammunition and 3,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition for the 7.62mm Type 56 light machine gun. The 140 kilowatt engine reputedly gave it a maximum road speed of 80 kilometres per hour, the engine giving a power to weight ratio of 30.7 horsepower to the tonnes.

832 . 'Zhongguo yanshide diyi cheling 8 x 8 chezhuangjia shusong che', *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheling*, 2002 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 197 Qi, pp. 20 – 22.

833 . 'Feixing landande tansuo ____ woguo shi zhide WZ141 ludai shi chaoqing fantanke shiyan xing zhanche', *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang*, 2007 Niandi, 3 Qi, Zhongdi 253, pp. 5 – 11.

The first version had a flat turret with one 105mm recoilless rifle either side of the turret with the second version having two different turrets. One had a sloped turret with slab sides, with the 105mm recoilless rifles in tandem and the ATGM rails on the gun barrels, in a cradle in the right side of the turret. The other had an enclosed turret that was wedge shaped all around, similar to the British Scorpion tracked reconnaissance vehicle, the HJ - 73 ATGM rails on either side of the turret, with a gun cradle towards the centre of the turret. The missile rails appear to be mounted co-axially with the gun cradle. Luo Ruiqing's criticism of the Chinese defence industry still held true.

The People's Liberation Army had started in 1949 as an army with no standardisation in its organisation or material yet by 1959 it had become well equipped but still lacking in the higher command and control mechanisms. At the height of the Cultural Revolution in 1969, China nearly brought the threat of nuclear war upon itself by initiating border disputes with the Soviet Union. The results of these border clashes contributed to Mao changing from his grand strategy of 'Luring the Enemy Deep' into the countryside in order to crush him with 'People's War' to 'Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big'. The latter meant the use of nuclear weapons that the Chinese were starting to acquire in numbers. The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict revealed how flawed the strategy of using nuclear weapons was and how bad the PLA's command and control, as well as staff planning, had become. It showed that that nuclear weapons and a large militia were not a panacea to a professional standing military. Despite the large investment in new designs, the PLA was using obsolescent equipment and the situation was getting worse.

Another factor was its involvement in internal peacekeeping during the Cultural Revolution, which had atrophied its combat power above the company level. This became clear in its operations against the Soviet Union in 1969 but little was done due to the Cultural Revolution and Mao's insistence on a peasant-based army. Arms production in the Cultural Revolution meant that it had finally standardised its equipment, but the crucible of combat against Vietnamese militia and reserves units revealed the problems of the PLA for all to see. The PLA was bloated with too many divisions, with the heavy artillery and main battle tanks available penny packeted amongst them. A catalyst was

needed to make the organisational changes required to turn the PLA into a modern fighting force, and that was the PLA's dismal performance in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict. This was to be the major factor from 1980 onwards for the PLA. The next chapter examines these changes and how they transformed the People's Liberation Army into a modern fighting force.

Chapter Five

Laying the Foundations: The Rise of the PLA's Operational Art in the Post Sino-Vietnamese War Period

The Revolution in Military Affairs and Information Warfare

The People's Liberation Army was investigating Information Warfare at the operational level well before the 1991 Gulf War. The September 1987 issue of *Bingqi Zhishi* contains an article by Yuan Wenlin titled, *Xinxi Zhan*, which translates as 'Information War'.⁸³⁴ This article also refutes the claims by many commentators of the PLA that the 1991 Gulf War took the PLA by surprise.

The article discusses the new warfare of disrupting an enemy command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I) system using *Qiu pian* (bluffing) through the use of false signals - 'transmission warfare'. It states that the responsibility for disrupting an enemy's C³I rests with the high command and not through separate departments. According to the article, to win a war one's own C³I must be strong and the first thing one must do in a war is disrupt/disable the enemy's C³I. The terms used are *reo loan* (disturb) and *gam reo* which appears to be an amalgam of *gam she* (interfere) and *reo loan* (disturb), and translates as disturb/disturbance.

Further, the article states that 'the responsibility does not just lie with intelligence, counter-intelligence and communications as separate departments. It is now controlled/directed/co-coordinated by the high command'. Thus the article appears to say

834. Yuan Wenlin. 'Xinxi Zhan', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 1987 Niandi, 5 Qi, Zhongdi 116 Qi, p. 10.

that C³I is now a more sophisticated form of warfare. The centralising/coordinating of offensive C³I operations and the importance of neutralising an enemy's C³I systems predate *People's War under high technology conditions*⁸³⁵ and Chinese Information Warfare doctrine. The article also referred to stealth aircraft. It noted that aircraft have to 'hide like a rat' from a cat (radar) but a family (of aircraft) can now reduce their appearance by 0.2 'making the cat nearsighted'.⁸³⁶

Training for the Operational Level of War

The operational level of war requires combined arms training on large exercise areas. The People's Liberation Army has built instrumented ranges, similar in concept if not technology to the United States Army's National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California.⁸³⁷ The Joint Training Facility is known as Fort Polk. The idea was based on a training initiative conducted at Fort Hood, Texas in the late 1970s. Called 'Red Thrust', it showed the possibilities of using soldiers familiar with enemy doctrine to aid 'Opposing Forces' (OPFOR) soldiers. This saw the NTC be equipped with dedicated OPFOR forces and equipment to train the US Army against Soviet forces.⁸³⁸ The United States military now incorporates 'Red Teams' into its planning and crisis-decision planning process to look at possible counters to their actions and incorporate changes before they could become a reality.⁸³⁹

835 . The State Council Information Office, PRC, *China's National Defense in 2002 (White Paper)*, 9 December 2002.

836 . Yuan Wenlin. 'Xinxi Zhan', *Bingqi Zhishi*, *op. cit.*

837 . For a history of the National Training Center see Herling, M.P. & Boisselle, J. 'Coming of age in the Desert: The NTC at 20', *Military Review*, September/October 2001.

838 . *Ibid.*, p. 1.

839 . Malone, T.G. & Schaupp, R.E. 'The "Red Team": Forging a Well-Conceived Contingency Plan', *Aerospace Power Journal*, Vol. XVI, Number 2, Summer 2002, pp. 22 – 33.

Blasko, Klapakis and Corbett, in their 1996 seminal work on training in the PLA, wrote that opposing forces training has three benefits: it adds realism not found in set-piece scenarios; this realism, which takes the form of changing battlefield conditions, causes commanders to use initiative to accomplish their missions; and thirdly, it exposes troops to new tactics, theoretically the tactics of a potential enemy.⁸⁴⁰ Their OPFOR units are referred to as ‘confrontational’ (*duikang xing*) or ‘blue’ (*lanse*) forces.⁸⁴¹

The PLA adopted the idea of creating its first OPFOR unit in the Nanjing Military Region (MR) in the 1980s and in 1984 established a large simulation centre in Beijing.⁸⁴² The Shenyang Military Region contains a large sized OPFOR unit to enable exercises at the ‘higher levels’.⁸⁴³ The high technology OPFOR unit in the Nanjing Region is called the ‘Black Panther Unit’ (*hei bao bu dui*). The Shenyang MR is the site for a tactical logistics simulation training system and where two divisions practised an information warfare exercise on 10 October 1997.⁸⁴⁴

The PLA has created a divisional land forces training area similar to Ford Polk using Chinese technology developed by the Nanjing Research Institute on Simulation Technique (NRIST). Called the digital directional (asset tracking) system, it utilises GPS tracking, audio-visual frequency compression and digital communication techniques, and could be used as a battle management system.⁸⁴⁵

840 . Blasko, D.J., Klapakis, P.T. & Corbett, J.F. ‘Training Tomorrow’s PLA: A Mixed Bag of Tricks’, *China Quarterly*, Number 146, April-June 1996, p. 497.

841 . *Ibid.*, p. 491, fn.4.

842 . Kondapalli, S. ‘Towards a Lean and Mean Army: Aspects of China’s Ground Force Modernisation’, *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 26, Number 4, October-December 2002, p. 471; *Foreign Bulletin Information Service FTS19980316000192 dated 16 March 1998*.

843 . *Ibid.*

844 . *Foreign Broadcast Information Service FTS19971227000149 dated 27 December 1997*.

845 . Wu Xiaochun, NRIST Keeps Forging Ahead’, *Military Training & Simulation News*, Volume 5, Issue 5, October 2003, pp. 36 & 37.

The PLA through the NRIST has also invested heavily in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). It has developed target drones including ones simulating cruise and anti-shiping missiles. The W-50 UAV has a reported ability to loiter over four hours depending on the payload and an operational range of over 100 kilometres.⁸⁴⁶ Their Z-3 remotely piloted helicopter, which utilises a GPS navigation system, has a takeoff weight of 130 kilograms including a 30 kilogram payload.⁸⁴⁷

The Change in Designating Weapons

The use of Western expressions in the PLA, when Chinese terms were used previously, is a simple example of the change away from People's War to a more modern military. The Chinese language can be written two ways, character based and phonetic. Many new weapons when introduced by mission due to the low level of literacy and problems of communicating with differing dialect groups were written as per their role. For example, the sub-machine gun was referred to as *chong feng qiang*, which translates as forward gun and the mortar as *po ji pao*, which translates as forward suppress cannon. Both translate their role, the mortar being developed in the First World War to suppress machine gun posts and the sub-machine gun being a weapon that has to be used in the front due to its short effective range when compared to rifles. Another term is *tanke*. This translates as tank but the characters mean to 'go effortlessly across the plains'. Similarly, hand grenade translates as 'hand thrown bomb', *shou liu dan*, with the middle character incorporating the characters of the pomegranate. The origin of the term 'hand grenade' comes from its likeness to a pomegranate. The *shou liu dan* is the term for the stick or 'potato masher' type grenade. The egg type hand grenade is called the *shou lei* (hand mine).

846 . Wu Xiaochun, NRIST Keeps Forging Ahead – Part II', *Military Training & Simulation News*, Volume 5, Issue 6, November 2003, pp. 54 & 55.

847 . *Ibid.*, p. 66.

The Type 67 7.62 x 54mm machine gun when introduced was referred to as *lian jiqiang* (company machine gun), but in line with Western terminology, this was later changed to *liangyong jiqiang* (dual use machine gun).⁸⁴⁸ This was changed again recently to *tong ying* (general purpose).⁸⁴⁹ These changes reflected the Chinese translation of the NATO term of general-purpose machine gun, which is a weapon that can be used as a light machine gun in the platoon or as a sustained fire or heavy machine gun at the company and battalion level. The interesting point is that the Type 67 machine gun is not used as a platoon weapon but is kept at the company level or higher. The new QJY88 5.8mm belt fed machine gun is referred to as a general or machine gun.⁸⁵⁰

The Operational Art in Action – Counter Terrorist Operations and Exercises in Xinjiang 2001- 2005

China's need for energy to fuel its burgeoning economy means that Xinjiang is now critical to China's future. The Tarin Basin alone has proven reserves of over one billion tons of crude oil and 59 billion cubic metres of natural gas. These oilfields are expected to provide 50 million tons annually by 2010.⁸⁵¹ Xinjiang, on China's western border with Kazakhstan and Afghanistan, is where the last 240 kilometres of the new 3000 kilometre Kazakhstan-to-China oil pipeline will run, where it will be refined or sent eastwards.⁸⁵² The Chinese economy requires these resources for its industries and more

848 . 'Li Gang. 'Juwang kailai de Zhongguo jichiang', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 1997 Niandi, 3 Qi, Zhongdi 114 Qi, p. 23.

849 . Zhongguo CF06 shi 7.62 haomi tongying jiqiang', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2007 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 238, p. 2

850 . 'Zhongguo QJY88 shi 5.8 haomi tongyong jiqiang, *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2000 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 148 Qi, p. 2.

851 . 'Xinjiang to be No.1 oil production area', *Xinhua on-line*, 22 May 2005, <http://www.xinuanet.com/english> accessed 23 May 2005

852 . 'Sinopec to step up efforts in western China', *People's Daily Daily on-line*, 5 January 2005,

energy intensive cities on the east coast; so it will brook no interruptions. The exploitation of natural resources from the impoverished western periphery to assist the rich eastern cities, may lead to a backlash in relations between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese, further straining relations between the two groups. This can only exacerbate the Uyghur's bitterness and distrust towards Beijing, and another cause for Uyghur independence and insurgency against the Chinese.

PLA operations and exercises in Xinjiang have been used to develop and impart experience in the operational art, whereas previously it had been used primarily for high altitude training. The Xinjiang Military Region, and not the Nanjing Military District, is now the premier information warfare test centre for the PLA. Secondly, it is the training area for large-scale operations. Because of its isolation and varied terrain it has been chosen for developing the new 'informationised'⁸⁵³ warfare for which the Chinese military is striving. China can develop its idea of information warfare in a relatively free airspace and ground environment, enabling the use of offensive electronic warfare and large scale manoeuvres away from prying eyes and without interfering with commercial activities. One of the aims of the operations and exercises is to train PLA soldiers and concurrently stop insurgents from Xinjiang crossing into neighbouring countries and vice-versa. They are also used as confidence and security building measures with China's neighbours and to evaluate new equipment.

Xinjiang has been the scene of independence movements since before the Second World War. There had been an East Turkestan Republic in Xinjiang in 1933 and 1944-50. The latter was the result of a Soviet-backed revolt and involved the northern three provinces that Communist Chinese forces retook peacefully in early 1950. The influx of Han

<http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 5 January 2005; 'China starts work on Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline', *People's Daily on-line*, 25 March 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 26 March 2005

853 . The State Council Information Office, PRC, *China's National Defense in 2006 (White Paper)*, 29 December 2006, and *China's National Defense in 2004 (White Paper)*, 27 December 2004.

Chinese; a revival in Islamic religion and culture in the 1980s and the idea of an independent republic, like the independent countries of Tadzhikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, created a volatile mixture which exploded in 1991.⁸⁵⁴ With two cultures, foreign to each other in the same locality, misunderstandings and incidents are bound to occur. Further migration of Han Chinese into Xinjiang will see the Uyghur become further marginalised in an area where they have lived for generations. Uyghurs now make up only 48 percent of Xinjiang's population of 18 million.⁸⁵⁵ Such an environment is conducive to the ferment of Islamic fundamentalism.

Rioting broke out in Xinjiang in April of 1991 and since then there has been a Uyghur-based insurgency in Xinjiang.⁸⁵⁶ The Chinese government has conducted an information warfare campaign against the Uyghurs in international forums labelling them terrorists and producing a white paper and briefings outlining their crimes against China.⁸⁵⁷ By using the 'war against terrorism', the PLA suppresses any signs of Uyghur independence and has claimed that the Uyghur insurgents are linked directly to the Taliban and Al Qaeda.⁸⁵⁸ In the State Council Information Office report on the Xinjiang Insurgency released in January 2002, Xinjiang insurgents are blamed for more than 162 deaths and 440 injured during the period 1990 to 2001.⁸⁵⁹ According to Chinese Government reports, Uyghur insurgents have been trained inside Afghanistan by Al Qaeda and have

854 . Millward, J. *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment*, East-West Center, Washington D.C., 2004, pp. 5 – 10; Davis, A. 'Xinjiang learns to live with resurgent Islam', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 8, No. 9, September 1995, p. 417; Fuller, G.E. & Starr, S.F. *The Xinjiang Problem*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, John Hopkins University, 2005, pp. 4 – 9.

855 . McGregor, A. 'Chinese Counter-Terrorist Strike in Xinjiang', *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, Volume 9, Number 5, 7 March 2007, pp. 13 – 15. For a recent on the ground look at ethnic tension in Xinjiang see, Mackerras, C. *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Volume VIII, Number 1, Winter 2004, at www.asiaquarterly.com/content/view/142 accessed 1 September 2007.

856 . Millward, *loc. cit.*; Davis, *loc. cit.*

857 . *East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity*, Information Office of State Council, Beijing, 21 January 2002

858 . *Ibid.*, pp. 15 & 16.

859 . *Ibid.*, p. 4.

received battle experience in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Kosovo.⁸⁶⁰ The March 2005 anti-secessionist law applies equally to Xinjiang and Tibet, as it does to Taiwan. China now uses the criminal code to justify its attacks on the Uyghur independence movements wherever it perceives them to be. The Chinese State Council on 27 December 2004 released a *White Paper on National Defense* where non-traditional security threats like terrorism were prominent.⁸⁶¹ Chapter Two states:

China attaches great importance to security cooperation in the non-traditional security fields with other countries, maintaining that in jointly combating non-traditional security threats, it is imperative to address both the symptoms and root causes and to adopt comprehensive measures.⁸⁶²

The 2006 *White Paper on National Defense* voiced it more aggressively:

Upholding national security and unity, and ensure the interests of national development. This includes guarding against and resisting aggression, defending against violation of China's territorial sea and air space, and borders; opposing and containing the separatist forces for 'Taiwan independence' and their activities, taking precautions against and cracking down on terrorism, separatism and extremism in all forms.⁸⁶³

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has been one means of suppressing Islamic fundamentalism in its member states and it may be argued that China uses it as a means of influencing Central Asian affairs. On 13 June 2001, to formalise and enhance a

860 . *Ibid.*, p. 7.

861 . The State Council Information Office, PRC, *China's National Defense in 2004 (White Paper)*, 27 December 2004..

862 . *Ibid.*

863 . The State Council Information Office, PRC, *China's National Defense in 2006 (White Paper)*, 29 December 2006.

series of bilateral and informal agreements, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tadjikistan signed and formalised the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.⁸⁶⁴ Also known as the Shanghai Treaty, the aim of the treaty is to fight ‘terrorism’, ‘separatism’ and religious ‘extremism’ – the ‘three evils’ as they are known – in their respective countries.⁸⁶⁵ It may be expected that the Chinese government dreads a Uyghur ‘People’s War’. The new infrastructure being built includes oil refineries, the pipeline, railways, power stations and the power grid would all be vulnerable to attack by insurgents who could cause vast damage to China’s economy for little effort. Central Asia has a large amount of infantry weapons, including rocket-propelled grenades, explosives and mortars, as a result of the many wars that occurred in the region in the 1990s.⁸⁶⁶

One way of keeping the Uyghur insurgency in check is by displays of force, of which Chinese security forces have not been lax in performing. The Xinjiang Military Area Command has an armoured regiment whose mission is to develop mobile operations and field survival techniques in high altitude warfare.⁸⁶⁷ A 2004 Human Rights Watch report stated that security forces in Xinjiang had prosecuted 22 cases of groups and individuals for alleged ‘separatist and terrorist activities’ in the period January to August 2004.⁸⁶⁸ A Chinese military newspaper noted in February 2005 that Chinese forces used tanks in a combat zone;⁸⁶⁹ as Xinjiang was the only area in China where combat operations had

864 . ‘Presidents of SCO Countries Sign Pact to Battle Three Forces’, *People’s Daily Online*, 15 June 2001

865 . *Ibid.*

866 . For example in Tadjikistan, there was a particularly bloody campaign. Andrew, M. ‘Arms shipments during the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and their Influence on the Current Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir’, *GI Zhou Newsletter*, Number Seven, October 2001, pp. 3 – 13; Sykholeskiy, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-45, 61.

867 . ‘The picture shows a tank shock element of the regiment conducting rapid mobile drill’, *PLA Daily Online*, 7 January 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 8 January 2005

868. *Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang*, Human Rights Watch, New York, 2005, p. 67.

869 . ‘Shenyang Military Region Mechanized Division Conducts Maintenance Exercises’, *Beijing Jiefangjun Bao*, 19 February 2005.

occurred, and then it may be the case that these tanks were employed against Uyghur insurgents.

By running counter-terrorist exercises in Xinjiang, both the PAP and PLA are able to develop counterinsurgency and terrorist techniques in an area in which they would be expected to operate, as well as refine command and control arrangements with similar forces in the region. On 6 August 2004, the first joint counter-terrorist exercise between the PLA and Pakistani forces, called 'Friendship 2004', was run in Xinjiang. A high altitude cold weather exercise, it comprised over 200 personnel that included personnel from the PLA's dedicated anti-terrorist battalion. The exercise entailed tracking down terrorists over Xinjiang's mountainous terrain.⁸⁷⁰

The significance of using Xinjiang for large-scale training is that if a series of insurgent incidents were to occur simultaneously in different parts of Xinjiang, the security forces already have the infrastructure and means to respond rapidly. One exercise involved a division in the Talikmakan Desert where it incorporate a command, control, communications, computers and intelligence local architecture network (C4I LAN) into in an area 1,000 kilometres long that integrated intelligence, command and control, automated artillery fire support, airspace surveillance and control and logistics resupply.⁸⁷¹ Units in Xinjiang have been commended by the PLA hierarchy as leading the way in the field of C4I.⁸⁷²

870 . 'Joint Sino-Pakistan Counter-Terrorist Exercise', *Bingqi Zhishi*, No. 204, 10/2004, p. 23.

871 . 'Xinjiang Military District Logistics Subdept Conducts Precision Support Exercise', *Jiefangjun Bao*, 20 November 2004; 'Lanzhou Military Region Division Tackles Training Subjects with Higher Information Technology Content', *Renmin Jundui*, 2 December 2004; 'Lanzhou Military Region Division Tackles Training Subjects with Higher Information Technological Content', *Jiefangjun Bao*, 22 December 2004; 'Lanzhou Military Region Meeting Reviews Progress of Leading organs in Informatisation Drive', *Renmin Jundui*, 28 December 2004.

872 . 'Lanzhou Military Region Motorised Infantry Brigade Strengthens Ability of Command Staff', *Renmin Jundui*, 1 January 2005.

PLA Special Forces at the Operational Level

A series of external and internal demands in China's security environment have resulted in modifications to the country's special forces units. Changes have been driven by the possibility of Taiwan's independence, the military requirements of increasing power projection capabilities, and the country's policy of 'active defence' that requires a pre-emptive strike capacity, as explained in the introduction to this thesis. Accordingly, PLA special forces have expanded their role from traditional reconnaissance operations to include counter-terrorism, hostage rescue, combat search and rescue, and direct attack missions.⁸⁷³

The People's Liberation Army, and its predecessor, the Red Army have always had special forces elements embedded within it. As noted in Chapter Two of this thesis, the Red Army in 1928 included a special task company in its regimental structure which was meant for headquarters protection but also used for other tasks; and the reconnaissance teams in the reorganised 1934 division wore civilian clothes and could carry pistols or grenades with them.⁸⁷⁴

These reconnaissance teams evolved into the regimental reconnaissance elements that besides receiving the best training also were given the latest equipment first. In the mid-1990s they were the first to units to be issued unmanned air vehicles, battlefield video systems and thermal imaging systems.⁸⁷⁵ Since the mid-1990s the roles of the PLA Special Forces have grown. They now train to attack the 'accupoints of the enemy' -

873 . 'Airborne Unit Begins Winter Drill to Retrain Troop', *Beijing Kongjun Bao*, 11 December 2004; Wei Chun. "Battle on the Sea of Death Battlefield", *PLA Pictorial*, 1 April 2005, pp. 28 – 31.

874 . Collier & Chin-Chih, *op. cit.*, p. 186; Mao Zedong. 'Resolutions of the Sixth Congress of Party Representatives from the Fourth Red Army (6 December 1928)', in Schram, 1995, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

875 . 'Chinese Army takes on New Look', *Peoples Daily Online*, 19 June 2002.

such as ballistic missile sites - by direct action, or inserted by helicopter and parachute to provide targeting data for strategic bombers and theatre ballistic missiles of the Second Artillery force.⁸⁷⁶

Each of China's seven military regions has a Special Forces battalion, dedicated to different tasks in accordance with the distinctive geography of the region and mission profile. The special operations battalion in Nanjing Military Region is involved in opposing forces (OPFOR) psychological warfare and trains with air, land and naval assets and 'stressful' live fire exercises.⁸⁷⁷ This unit is responsible for operations in the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea; beach reconnaissance and conducting raids would be part of its training. The PLA invests significant resources on studying the lower level operations and equipment of foreign forces. The mission of the Blue Team OPFOR staff in Beijing is to study advanced tactical theories of foreign military forces, and by its own admission collects a large amount of information on them.⁸⁷⁸ It is doubtful if any Western country has a comparable organisation to study foreign forces at the lower levels. This enables PLA special forces to understand how potential adversaries operate.

The PLA's First Army Airmobile Regiment was stationed in Xinjiang and develops tactics and doctrine for heliborne operations including night time combat, search and rescue, as well as conducting counter-terrorist and insurgency missions.⁸⁷⁹ Its mission profile is similar to a US Army Ranger battalion combined with the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne).⁸⁸⁰ Stationed there after 11 September 2001 to combat Uyghur separatists, the unit was initially equipped with approximately

876 . 'Airborne Unit Begins Winter Drill to Retrain Troop', *Beijing Kongjun Bao*, 11 December 2004; Wei Chun., *loc. cit.*

877 . *Renmin Jianxian*, 28 January 2005.

878 . *Fazhi Ribao*, 4 January 2005

879 . 'Xinjiang Military District Holds Anti-Terrorist Drill', *Zhuongguo Guofang Bao* on-line, 12 December 2004; Wei Chuan & Liang Yongli., 'Xinjiang MD Army Air Regiment Conducts Nighttime Search-and-Rescue Training', *Zhuongguo Guofang Bao*, 4 May 2005.

880 . These missions include counter terrorism, counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, direct action and special reconnaissance. Pushies, F.J. *Night Stalkers: 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne)*, Zenith Press, St Paul, 2005, pp, 29 & 30.

30 Chinese built Z-9G helicopters.⁸⁸¹ It also has People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) Mi-17 transport helicopters available to provide greater troop lift and fire support. These are equipped with navigation radar and uprated engines with an auxiliary power unit to ensure reliable starting at altitudes up to 4,000 metres.⁸⁸² It is difficult to establish whether it is still in Xinjiang, but 16 Z-9G and 16 Mi-17 helicopters that were deployed to Russia for the August 2007 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) exercise, *Peace Mission 2007*, came from Xinjiang.⁸⁸³

Since late October 2002 the PLA has conducted an annual joint anti-terrorist exercise with its neighbours under the auspices of the SCO. The first one involved PLA personnel from the Army Airborne Regiment and Kyrgyzstan forces on the Sino-Kyrgyzstan border in the western region of Xinjiang. Other members of the SCO were present as observers. This was the basis for developing operational level planning and execution of multinational counter-terrorist operations under the auspices of the SCO.⁸⁸⁴ The next exercise called 'Unite 2003' was conducted from 6-12 August with forces from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tadzhikistan, with the third, 'Two Friends – 2004', conducted on 6 August 2004 by over 200 PLA and Pakistani Special Forces including personnel from the PLA's new dedicated anti-terrorist battalion.⁸⁸⁵

881 . Licensed produced Eurocopter AS 565 Panther 2 helicopters., see 'China Dispatched 30 Z-9G helicopters to the Sino-Afghan Border to Prevent Terrorists from Entering China and to Annihilate Terrorists Associated with Eastern Turkestan', *World Journal*, 23 October 2001, p. A7.

882 . Lavrentiev, A.P. *The International Workhorse - the Mi-17*, located on the Kazan Helicopter Production Association website: http://www.kcn.ru/tat_en/economics/profiles/k/kvz/lavrent.html, accessed on 26 February 2003.

883 . Daly, J.C.K. 'SCO to Host "Peace Mission 2007" Anti-Terrorist Drill in August', *Eurasian Daily Monitor*, Volume 4, Issue 146, 27 July 2007.

884 . 'Zhongji lianhe junyan', *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheling*, 2002 Niandi, 12 Qi, Zhongdi 202 Qi, p. 49.

885 . 'Zhong Ba shouci lianhe fankong yanxi', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2004 Niandi, 10 Qi, Zhongdi 204, p. 23.

Unite-2003 was comparatively complex and built on the knowledge gained from the previous year's exercise.⁸⁸⁶ The exercise started at Kazakhstan's border city of Ucharal on 6 August and then continued into China in the Ili prefecture of Xinjiang, finishing on 12 August. The manoeuvre phase was built around the scenario of international terrorists having hijacked an aeroplane and violated the airspace of Kazakhstan whilst another group of international terrorists set up a base camp from where they were to create terrorist incidents. The exercise included Kazak armoured infantry using BMP-2 infantry combat vehicles as well as the army airborne regiment.

The 2007 joint counter-terrorist exercise - 'Hand-in-Hand 2007' - was between Indian and Chinese Special Forces and ran from 21 to 25 December.⁸⁸⁷ It was a confidence and security building exercise involving 206 personnel and was conducted in hilly terrain near Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province.⁸⁸⁸ It is notable for the fact that Indian and Chinese forces still face off against each other in the Himalayas.

As the PLA's Special Forces grow the need for a single command authority which crosses military region responsibilities will arise. It will enable the government to deal with the one organisation in the event of a major terrorist incident, and given the impossibility of stopping foreign media transmissions during high level events (such as the Beijing Olympics 2008), this will be vital. This and the expansion of roles for the PLA's Special Forces can be expected to lead to some form of Special Operations Command as practised by the United States and Australia. It will also ensure the standardisation of training, which is currently a regional responsibility, the proper use of specialised equipment, and prevent the misuse of Special Forces personnel by regional

886 . 'Shanghai hezuo zuzhi chengyuan wuzhuang liliang "lianhe-2003" fankong yanxi lueying', *Xiandai junshizao (CONMILIT)*, 2003 Niandi, 10 Qi, Zhongdi 321 Qi, pp. 2 - 5.

887 . 'China, India wrap up anti-terror military training', *PLA Daily Online*, 26 Dec 2007 accessed 2 Jan 2008.

888 . *Ibid.*

commanders. A joint police and military command unit was set up for the security of the Beijing Olympics.⁸⁸⁹

To conclude this sub-section on Chinese Special Forces, People's War was a doctrinal strategy that was never taken to heart by the People's Liberation Army. The nucleus of the PLA's ready reaction forces of today were the 'Model Companies' in the early 1960s which the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution stymied, as was shown in the previous chapter. After the Cultural Revolution the now rehabilitated cadres started from where they had left off, creating a professional People's Liberation Army based on ready reaction forces. The shedding of Mao's thoughts, especially People's War, started by removing leftist PLA commanders and was given impetus by the debacle of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. The process that had been started, but hampered by legacies resulting from the Cultural Revolution, was renewed with vigour. Twenty years on from Deng Xiaoping's March 1980 speech calling for the modernisation in the PLA, it had achieved his four objectives and can now operate as a combined arms force on the periphery of China. Further, it has gone from a predominately infantry-based force, where armour and artillery were subordinate, to an armed force where there are now substantial combined arms units.

Reorganising and Reequipping the PLA after 1979

To accomplish the new realities of combat, the PLA started from the bottom up by reorganising the structure of its infantry company, the building block of the PLA, and increasing the effectiveness of its weapons.

Turning to the platoon structure, it is notable that in the 1980s the PLA's infantry squad was reorganised into two teams each, one with a Type 56 (RPD) light machine gun, the other with a Type 69 rocket propelled grenade launcher (RPG) which was the main squad

889 . Li Jing, Beijing unveils security plan for Olympics, *China Daily Online*, 23 March 2005, accessed 23 DSeptember 2007.

anti-armour weapon.⁸⁹⁰ The present PLA returned to the structure of its roots in the 1930s. In 1938 the basic squad of the Eighth Route Army comprised three teams of three to five men armed with bolt-action rifles, hand grenades, and on paper, one automatic rifle or light machine gun.⁸⁹¹

The change in structure was likely due to lessons learned resulting from the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict. The combat power of an army resides in its battalions and companies, for if they fail so does the operation. As the PLA becomes more mechanized and heliborne, and moves to more long-range mission profiles the size and weight of the infantry weapons becomes more important. So does the soldiers' load bearing equipment so they can carry more equipment comfortably, or else fatigue and injury quickly occur. The PLA has always lacked long-range anti-armour weapons in the regiment, let alone the battalion, and to some extent still does.

After the Sino-Vietnamese conflict the squad was reorganized into two fire teams, each with a squad automatic weapon, assault rifles and one of the squads was also equipped with a rocket propelled grenade launcher.⁸⁹² Around the same time the PLA introduced the Model 81 assault rifle to replace the Model 56 assault rifle, and the heavy barrel version to replace the Model 56 light machine gun.⁸⁹³

On facing the armour threat, 'hugging the enemy' was the anti-armour philosophy of the People's Liberation Army in 1980. The Model 69 RPG was and still is a viable weapon in close combat, so the PLA increased its effectiveness with the fielding of improved

890 . Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

891 . Carlson, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 & 28; Griffith, *op. cit.*, fn. 28, p. 386.

892 . Taken from discussions with specialists on PLA Chinese infantry.

893 . Wu Jan-Ping. 'The People's Liberation Army in the 21ST Century – An Analysis of the Possible Implications of PLA Troop Reductions', *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 145, No. 3, June 2000, p. 46; Dong Yuan. 'China's 7.62 mm Rifle Series Type 81', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 3/1999, May 1989, pp. 8 & 9.

anti-armour, as well as airburst and incendiary anti-personnel warheads.⁸⁹⁴ The short-range anti-armour capability of the PLA infantry section received a considerable boost in 1989 with the introduction of the PF 89 80 mm disposable anti-armour rocket launcher. The PF 89 weighs 3.6 kg, is 900 mm long overall and is claimed to be able to penetrate 630 mm of armour plate.⁸⁹⁵ There is also a bunker buster version called the PF 89A which weighs 4.2 kg and uses a similar round the Carl Gustaf 84 mm HEDP 502 round.⁸⁹⁶ Compared to the standard PF89 it is 0.5 kg heavier at 4.2 kg, a smaller effective range of 180 metres compared to 200 metres, but a larger maximum range of 1,000 metres compared to 400 metres. Its penetration against armour plate is 20mm at 0°. Its dimensions are the same as the anti-armour version.⁸⁹⁷

To increase the infantry's capability against modern composite and explosive reactive armour panels the PF 98 120 mm rocket launcher was fielded in 1998. With an effective range of 400 metres, that increases to 800 metres with advanced sights, its bulk and weight mean that it is kept at least at the company level. This is to stop the infantry squads being burdened with the weight and bulk of extra ammunition. Although the launcher weighs a little less than 10 kg the anti-armour round weighs 6.28 kg and the multi-purpose round, 7.6 kg.⁸⁹⁸ The PLA has reinvented the Carl Gustaf 84 mm recoilless rifle which has been in service with Western armies since the early 1960s.⁸⁹⁹

894 . Sykholeskiy, op. cit.; Guo Qiang. 'China's New 40 mm Rocket Weapon System Type 69-1', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 3/1988, May 1988, pp 14 & 15.

895 . Gong Maodao,. 'China's PF 89 Individual Anti-Tank Rocket', *Bingqi Zhishi*, July 1996, p. 3.

896 . 'Zhongguo PF89 shi 80mm huojian danbing wuqi xitong', *Qing Bingqi*, November 2002, p. 13.

897 . 'Wo zhong PF89 shi 80 mm dan bing huojian qi xitong', *Qing Bingi*, 2002 Niandi, 10 Qi, Zhongdi 164 Qi, pp. 12 & 13.

898 . 'Zhongguo PF98 120 haomi fantanke huojian', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 12/2000, December 2000, pp. 16 & 17.

899 . The M3 Carl Gustaf is 1.13 metres long, weighs 8 kg and the high explosive dual purpose 84mm round weighs 3.25 kg. *The new 84 mm RCL Carl-Gustaf*, FFV Ordnance, 1990.

An improved version of the *Hong Jian-73* was introduced in the late 1980s, around the same time as the *Hong Jian Ba* (Red Arrow 8) anti-tank guided missile. The launcher is similar in design to the European Milan and the missile itself to the United States TOW, the Red Arrow-8 is available in both vehicle and tripod mounted versions and gives the infantry an anti-tank capability out to 3,000 metres.⁹⁰⁰ This has been issued to battalion anti-tank platoons and companies.

The rocket propelled grenade launcher is central to the concept of People's War by militia type forces. In the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war the Vietnamese militia performed in an optimal fashion, blunting the Chinese attacks using mostly infantry weapons including the RPG. Another early example of People's War being successfully tested in combat against modern high quality forces was the Egyptian militia during the Israeli attack on Suez City in 1973. The militia in both cases had the missions of blunting an aggressor's attack, and performing rear area and key point defence, to enable the standing army to prosecute the main battle. Both were armed with similar weapons and their capability against their contemporary armour was based on the rocket propelled grenade and hand thrown anti-tank grenades. The performance of the Egyptian militia equipped with rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and hand thrown anti-tank grenades in the Battle for Suez, supported by a small amount of *Malyutka* (Sagger) anti-tank guided missiles and artillery, was particularly outstanding.⁹⁰¹ On 24 October 1973 an Israeli mechanized infantry battalion supporting an armoured brigade attacked the port city of Suez. One hour later the Israelis were repulsed and admitted to losing 28 armoured vehicles.⁹⁰² Despite further attacks against the city outskirts the Israelis never ventured back into the city.⁹⁰³ Vehicles were hit with RPGs, ATGMs, and from grenades and Molotov cocktails thrown from upper storeys of buildings onto the weak top armour.⁹⁰⁴

900 . 'Zhongguo "Hongjian"-8L Fan Tanke Daodan Nongqi Xitong', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2002 Niandi, 6 Qi, Zhongdi 176 Qi, Pages 10 & 11.

901. Rogers, G.F. 'The Battle for Suez City', *Military Review*, November 1979, p. 33.

902. *Ibid.*, pp. 32 & 33.

903. *Ibid.*

904. *Ibid.*

The 1994 New Year's Eve assault on Grozny by the Russian 131st Maykop Brigade suffered a similar fate due to insufficient and poorly trained conscript infantry in support. By 3 January the brigade had lost over 800 men, 20 out of 26 tanks, 102 out of 120 BMP Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicles and their six Tunguska M-1 self-propelled gun/surface-to-air missile vehicles. Many of the BMPs had few or no dismounts onboard, and many of the infantry were killed in them, as they refused to dismount.⁹⁰⁵ In the battle for Grozny and other Chechen cities, a minimum of four hunter-killer teams simultaneously attacked a single armoured vehicle from different directions. They aimed for crew hatches, the top and engine transmission compartment decking, the area behind the turret and the side area not covered by skirts.⁹⁰⁶ Chechen forces also dropped bottles filled with gasoline or jellied fuel on top of vehicles. The Chechen and Egyptian hunter-killer teams trapped vehicle columns in city streets where destruction of the first and last vehicles stopped the column and allowed its total destruction.⁹⁰⁷ The Chechen equivalent of a platoon consists of 15 to 20 personnel subdivided into three or four man cells. Each cell comprises a RPG gunner, a machine gunner and a sniper.⁹⁰⁸ Additional personnel served as ammunition bearers and assistant gunners. This was highly illustrative of the 'man over machine philosophy', espoused by Mao. In late 1999 and early 2000 the Russians imitated Chechen methods when they again attacked Grozny. The Russians employed *troika* teams comprising a sniper, machine gunner and grenade launcher.⁹⁰⁹ Two soldiers, who acted as ammunition carriers and/or assistant gunners,

905 . Litovkin, V. 'Rasstrel 131i maikopskoi brigadiy', *Izvestia*, 11 January 1995, p. 4; Barayantinsky, M. *Tanks in Chechnya*, Rail Road Press, Moscow, 1999, p. 11.

906 . Suvorov, S. 'The T-72: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', *Tekhnika-Moledezhi*, Moscow, 2001, p. 54; Vladykin, O. 'Russian Tanks Did Not Let Us Down in Chechnya. But Fewer of Them Could Have Been Lost...', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 22 February 1995, pp. 1 & 3.

907 . Grau, L.A. 'Russian-Manufactured Armored Vehicle Vulnerability in Urban Combat: The Chechnya Experience', *Red-Star*, January 1997, p. 2; Rogers, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

908 . *Ibid.*

909 . Thomas, T.L. 'Grozny 2000: Urban Combat Lessons Learned', *Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth*, 2000, p. 4.

supplemented the team.⁹¹⁰ There have been calls for the section establishment to go from nine to 11 to allow the forming of three *troika* teams.⁹¹¹

In the area of small arms, in March 1971, the Chinese military decided to move towards a smaller rifle and machine gun calibre rifle and various calibres between 5 mm and 6 mm. A smaller round enables more ammunition to be carried and the weapon made lighter and smaller. A 2004 article in *Qing Bingqi* looked at various cartridges developed before the 5.8 mm DBP87 was accepted into service.⁹¹² Identified as the 5.8 x 42 mm round the projectile's diameter is actually 6 mm and the unfired case length is 42 mm. The DBP 87 round has a low ballistic co-efficient and is light in weight for its calibre and thus is not designed as a long-range round. The wound ballistics of the projectile is intriguing. It is short, and with the steel core taking up so much of the projectile, would have poor stability. Thus it would tend to tumble easily on impact with soft tissue but is unlikely to break up. The steel core would give it effective penetration on body armour, as the projectile has no cannelure to create a weak spot at which the projectile could break apart. It is not the best designed round for the calibre but for use under 300 metres is adequate.

Harlan Jencks in a 2000 conference paper on the PLA reasoned that the introduction of a new round to the PLA 'may be a self-inflicted wound'.⁹¹³ This is because the PLA's new Type 95 family of small arms uses a different calibre ammunition to any other country, meaning PLA soldiers have to carry more ammunition and magazines as they cannot replenish their stocks from other sources, whereas previously they could. It is possible that the PLA followed the trend that was evident in Western military forces. The 5.8 x 42

910 . Grau, L. 'Technology and the Second Chechen Campaign: Not All New and Not That Much' in Eldis, A. C. (ed) *The Second Chechen War*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, Camberley, 2000, p. 108.

911 . Tereshchenko, V. 'And "Grandpa" Is Repaired' in Roshchin, S; Reznichenko, S; & Saoylyuk, S. 'War Doesn't Sleep', *Armeyskiy Sbornik*, October 2000, p. 51.

912 . 'Zhongguo xiaokoujing buqiang dansheng neimu/liu ming', *Qing Bingqi*, 2004 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 193 Qi, pp. 32 – 35.

913 . Jencks, H. 'Thoughts and Questions about PLA Ground Forces', A paper prepared for the Conference on *Chinese Military Studies: A Conference on the State of the Field*, National Defense University Washington, DC, October 26–27, 2000, p. 11.

mm round is close to the 6 x 45 mm XM 732 6 mm squad automatic weapon round, developed by the Frankford Arsenal in the early 1970s.⁹¹⁴ The 5.8 x 42 mm round would give soldiers equipped with weapons chambered for it, an advantage over soldiers equipped with weapons chambered for 5.56 mm NATO, 5.45 mm Russian and 7.62 x 39 mm M43. Secondly, other countries have considered the introduction of new small arms calibres. NATO believes a new calibre is warranted for personal defence weapons and the United States military wanted a 6 mm round in the 1970s for squad light machine guns.⁹¹⁵ The 5.56 mm NATO round is not regarded as a suitable light machine gun round as it lacks range and penetration against sand bags, masonry and wood.⁹¹⁶

With the creation of ready reaction forces and the increased mechanisation of the PLA since the late 1980s, a small lightweight family of small arms was required. The calibre of 5.8 mm was selected after various calibres between 5.5 mm and 6 mm were tried and became known by Western militaries as the 5.8 x 42 mm.⁹¹⁷

The family of the small arms using the DBP87 .8 x 42mm cartridge are:

- a. QBZ87A assault rifle;
- b. QBU88 sniping rifle;
- c. QJY88 belt-fed general purpose machine gun;

914 . From information provided by Mr William Woodin dated 29 December 1999 and Crist, S.C. 'Is 6mm the Optimum Caliber? A Common Cartridge for Rifle and Machinegun', *Infantry*, Vol. 89, No. 3, September-December 1999, pp. 6 – 8; Smith P. *Variations of Military Experimental Calibers*, Amendment No. 5, Published by author, Iqaluit, March 1999, p. 062-045.

915 . Cutshaw, C.Q. 'Heckler & Koch aims it latest weapons to fill the gap between pistol and rifle', *International Defense Review*, September 2000.

916 . Bostock, I. 'ADF considers 7.62 mm comeback', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 13 September 2000; Crist, op.cit., p. 8.

917 . Correspondence from Mr William Woodin dated 31 August 1998 and Mr David Andrew

- d. QBZ95 assault rifle;
- d. QBZ95A assault rifle – a product improved version of the QBZ87A;
- e. QBB95 squad automatic weapon based on the Model 95 assault rifle; and the
- f. QBZ95B carbine version of the QBZ95 assault rifle.

The first rifle designed for it was the QBZ87A, and similar in appearance to the Model 81 7.62 mm x 43 mm assault rifle. It was not introduced into service as it did not offer any weight benefit, with its reduced calibre, when compared with the Model 56.⁹¹⁸ This was also the case with Heckler and Koch's 5.56 x 45 mm G-41 in the early 1980s, when compared to the 7.62 x 51 mm G-3. It was redesigned in 1995 and designated the QBZ95A, and again redesigned in 2002 and designated the QBZ03. The major differences from the QBZ95A are a new folding stock copied from the Heckler and Koch G36, a SIG 540 style foregrip, and a slim mount for the standard 3x optical sight used on Chinese rifles.⁹¹⁹

The second rifle was the QBU88 sniping rifle. This weapon is a bullpup, and the Swiss SIG 550 influenced its design. It has an overall length of 920 mm and weighs 4.2 kg empty with its telescopic sight adding another 0.6 kg. The rifle also has a burst fire capability.⁹²⁰ It is an urban warfare weapon as the 5.8 mm DBP 87 round's long-range characteristics are poor but are adequate in urban areas where most combat occurs at 100 metres or less.⁹²¹

918 . Wo junbanyong wuqide huimou yu zhanwang', *Qing Bingqi*, 2002 Niandi, 10 Qi, Zhongdi 164 Qi, p. 13.

919 . 'Zhongguo 03 zidong buqiang', *Qing Bingqi*, 2005 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 193 Qi, pp. 32 – 35.

920 . Li Shulin. 'A Brief Introduction to China's 5.8 mm Sniper Rifle', *Bingqi Zhishi*, August 1997, p. 12.

921 . Small, S.C. 'Small Arms and Asymmetric Threats', *Military Review*, Vol. LXXX,

The QJY88 belt-fed general purpose machine gun is in limited service. It has an effective ground range of 800 metres, vertically up to 500 metres and a combat rate of fire of 200 to 300 rounds per minute.⁹²² In the light machine gun role without its tripod it weighs 7.6 kg and is 1,151 mm long. With the tripod the overall length is 1,321 mm and the tripod weighs 4.2 kg giving an empty weight of 11.8 kg.⁹²³ The barrel is 600 mm long and the weapon has a muzzle velocity is 895 m/sec.⁹²⁴ It has a 200 linked round magazine available. This weapon is suitable for neither role being too large and heavy for a light machine gun in its calibre and the cartridge too light for a tripod mounted sustained fire machine gun. It has an effective ground range of 800 metres, vertically up to 500 metres and a combat rate of fire of 200 to 300 rounds per minute.⁹²⁵

The first assault rifle issued using the DBP87 round, the QBZ 95A, was publicly first seen on 1 July 1997, carried by the PLA's Hong Kong garrison when arriving after the handover. It weighs 3.25 kg empty, is 746 mm long, the barrel is 520 mm long and as a military weapon has numerous design faults. It has too many parts when field stripped, especially rods, and due to the weapon's short sight picture it requires an optic sight with issue one having 3x magnification.⁹²⁶ Worse still, the 30 round magazine protrudes too far below the pistol grip to allow firing lying down.⁹²⁷

November - December 2000, No. 6, p. 38.

922 . Wang Tingrong. 'Zhhongguo QJY 88 5.8 haomi tonhyong jiqiang', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2002 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 148 Qi, p. 2.

923 . 'QJY88 shi 5.8mm tongyong jiqiang', *Qingbingqi*, 2007 Niandi, 10 (xia) Qi, Zhongdi 257, pp. inside front cover and 1.

924 . 'QJY88 shi 5.8mm tongyong jiqiang', *Qing BingQi*, 2006 Niandi, 5 (shang) Qi, Zhongdi 222 Qi, photograph inside front cover

925 . Wang, *loc.cit.*

926. Xan, XF. 'Chinese Type 97 5.56mm Automatic Rifle', *Bingqi Zhishi*, April 2000, pp. 19 – 21.

927 . *Ibid.*

The QBB *squad machine gun* variant is equipped with a bipod and a 75 round drum magazine and weighs 3.95 kg empty and has an overall length of 840 mm and the barrel is 614 mm in length.⁹²⁸ With a fully loaded drum magazine the weapon is unbalanced due to the weight of the magazine near the butt. This makes it awkward to carry and use in action.

The QBZ95B carbine is a personal defence/close quarter weapon and is fired like a stocked pistol.⁹²⁹ It is compact and has a prominent foresight which, when shooting with both eyes open, enables quick engagements of targets.

To provide a grenade launching capability the Model 95 rifle can be equipped with the Model 91B 35 mm rifle mounted grenade launcher. The launcher weighs 1.45 kg empty, is 310 mm long and the sights are set to 75, 100, 200, 250, 300 and 350 metres. The combat rounds available are high explosive, canister (buckshot), a smoke round that covers 10 square metres, and an illumination round of four to five million candela. For riot duty there is a tear gas that is claimed to cover 140m² in a wind speed of 1-2 m/sec and a temperature of 15⁰C, and a target marking round to enable identification of individuals after a riot.⁹³⁰

The PLA now wears camouflage uniforms with a new uniform, boots, load bearing equipment and Kevlar helmet, all in the same camouflage pattern similar to the United States woodland scheme but with more green.⁹³¹ The QGF02 helmet and XZJ91

928 . Gao Tan. 'China's Newly Developed 5.8 mm Squad Weapon', *Bingqi Zhishi*, July 1997, p. 9.

929 . For an explanation of the Personal Defence Weapon concept see, Cutshaw C.Q. 'Heckler and Koch aims its latest weapons to fill the gap between pistol and rifle', *International Defense Review on line*, 9/2001, September 2001.

930 . Hu Qingqiang . 'QLG 91B 35 mm Rifle Mounted Grenade Launcher, *Bingqi Zhishi*, August 1999, pp. 10 & 11.

931 . Wu Jan-Ping, 'The People's Liberation Army in the 21ST Century', *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 145, No. 3, June 2000, p. 46.

personal combat vest designs have been strongly influenced by United States designs.⁹³² The XZJ91 vest is best described as a modified United States Individual Tactical Load Bearing Vest (ITLBV) even incorporating the United States quick release pistol belt buckle.⁹³³ It incorporates four pouches for Model 95 rifle magazines and two stick grenades. The People's Armed Police in Xinjiang have also been photographed in similar camouflage uniforms, two different types of non-camouflaged chest webbing and Model 81 assault rifles. As noted above, the Model 81 assault rifle is a modern design, and with the combat vest holding at least five magazines, the PAP personnel were equipped for combat, not for show.⁹³⁴ Differing types of webbing are not uncommon as photographs of soldiers of all nations on operations show. Individuals will carry what suits them best, not necessarily what is officially issued.

The PLA has yet to introduce a lightweight anti-armour guided missile like the US Army's FGM-148 Javelin. The PLA has, however, introduced the improved Red Arrow-8E missile system into the battalion anti-armour platoons and companies. Similar in appearance to the United States BGM-71 TOW, the system can launch all previous Red Arrow-8 missiles and the new missile uses a tandem warhead to defeat explosive reactive armour. Equipped with a digital guidance system incorporating integral test equipment it can be equipped with a thermal imaging sight. Produced by the China North Industrial Company (NORINCO) it has a maximum range of 4, 000 metres.⁹³⁵

The Effects of PLA Modernisation on the Battalion Structure

932 . Yang Tingxin, Liang Tiande Liu Shanhui. 'Zhongchang QGF02 junyong', *Bingqi Zhishi*, May 1998, pp. 2 & 3.

933 . For the United States Individual Tactical Load Bearing Vest see Rottman, G.L. *U.S. Army Combat Equipments, 1910-1988*, Men-at-arms series: 205, Osprey Publishing, London, 1989, pp. 40, 48 and plate H.

934 . Lawrence, S.V. 'Where Beijing Fears Kosovo', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 163, No. 36, 7 September 2000, p. 22.

935 . *Bingqi Zhishi*, 8/1999, August 1999, explanation of cover photograph on contents page.

At the battalion level, the class C battalion structure would seem to be the norm for the PLA's rapid deployment units. It has a nine-man squad and all the support weapons grouped at the battalion level. It appears similar to the proposals for the restructure of the Russian motorised and airborne battalions in light of their experiences in Chechnya. Separate mortar, anti-armour and machine gun platoons are already incorporated in the People's Liberation Army class C battalion structure. Proposals have been put forward for the Russian motorised rifle battalion to incorporate all their company level support weapons into a fire support company with separate mortar, machine gun, anti-aircraft and anti-tank platoons.⁹³⁶ The Australian infantry battalion has already done this with its direct fire support weapon platoon at the battalion level.⁹³⁷

The infantry company would keep the fire support section but the present two 60 mm mortars would most likely be replaced with different weapons depending on the role of the infantry. Mechanized infantry have fire support available from the organic weapons of the armoured personnel carriers so anti-tank guided weapons would replace the 60 mm mortars. Heliborne infantry still need the light mortars, as when the helicopters leave they have no organic fire support.

The mechanisation of the PLA has instigated huge changes to the infantry battalion. At the lowest level of organization, the squad, the PLA has gone back to the days of the Red Army in Yan'an. The squad now has three fire teams, each of three men. It should result in increased firepower compared with the previous structure with each team having a grenade launcher, machine gun and sniping rifle. The squad fits well with the PLA's armoured personnel carriers and helicopters, at best, can carry a squad of nine men.

936 . Zolotov, L.S. *Voyennoye Mysl*, (Military Thought), No. 3-2001, p. 19

937 . Bostock, I. 'Australian Army seeks new assault weapon', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 14 March 2001.

The new structure would give the infantry company more flexibility at the platoon level and brings it in line with developments in Western armies. It is unlikely that the platoon structure changes a great deal across the various infantry types. Whether the infantry are dropped by parachute, inserted by helicopter, ride in the back of vehicles, or walk, they are all foot infantry when on the ground.

To summarise the period since the Sino-Vietnamese War: the People's Liberation Army modernised from an organisation that was bloated, had almost non-existent logistics, lacked modern communications and command and control equipment, used ineffective anti-armour weapons, had ill-trained staff officers and was in need of major reform. Within three decades of the Sino-Vietnamese War, it had become a modern fighting force on the cusp of becoming a force able to conduct land operations deep into an opponent's country and developing concepts to be able to fight a modern land battle in the 21st Century.

Chapter Six

The Future of the PLA

With the break up of the Soviet Union and China's rapid economic boom, the centre of gravity has moved to its sources of energy. This means that China's offensive mechanized forces are now more heavily focused on the northwest due to Xinjiang's and Central Asia's critical role in China's energy needs. In addition, the PRC, like other naval powers in the Asia Pacific, has enlarged and updated its amphibious capability as part of the modernization of the PLA Navy (PLAN). Most prominently, the PLA has engaged in the accelerated deployment of short-range and theatre ballistic missiles opposite Taiwan by initially redeploying remnant Cold War forces from the Sino-Russian border.

The rhetoric of People's War has given way to articles on 'informatized warfare' and writings that refer to digital mapping, active electronic warfare and deception measures, computer virus attack, data transfer and computerised battle management systems.⁹³⁸ Units now regularly deploy in the brutal winters in Xinjiang and Tibet, and Xinjiang itself acts as a huge test site for these new methods of warfare (see Chapter Five). Initial battles against an aggressor are to be fought on the periphery, not deep inside the borders as envisioned by Mao; though Mao himself in the 1930s acknowledged this would cause a large amount of destruction to the infrastructure.⁹³⁹ In any event, it was highly unlikely that Soviet armoured forces would have let themselves be drawn deep into the Chinese heartland.

Yet informatised warfare has now been overtaken by a doctrine designed for broad sweeping operations, as envisaged by the Soviet operational art theorists that taught the

938 . 'Xinjiang Military District Logistics Subdept Conducts Precision Support Exercise', *loc. cit.*; 'Lanzhou Military Region Division Tackles Training Subjects with Higher Information Technology Content', *loc. cit.*; 'Lanzhou Military Region Division Tackles Training Subjects with Higher Information Technological Content', *loc. cit.*; 'Lanzhou Military Region Meeting Reviews Progress of Leading organs in Informatisation Drive', *loc. cit.*

939 . Described in the contemporary literature as the 'breaking of pots and pans'. Mao Zedong. 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War', in Schram, *op. cit.*, 1999, p. 501

original PLA generals in the 1920s and 30s, as shown in Chapter One. The operational art of the PLA has become firmly rooted in the concepts and doctrine of *pei shu* ('attaching troops to a subordinate unit'), which means the creation of independent battle groups within the division or augmenting a division seamlessly with heavier forces.⁹⁴⁰ The other important concept is *zhi chi* (to support), meaning the creation of a battlefield logistics organisation able to supply and support forces deep inside an enemy's rear.⁹⁴¹

Like other militaries, the PLA calculates force posture based upon geopolitical considerations as well as the force's mission, put simply threats based versus capabilities based. For the most part, China's security centres of gravity were in the north and northeast, and its deployment of forces on its land borders has almost always been defensive. Forces in the southwest have been composed of light units due to the tropical swamps and jungles in the region. Likewise, Tibet's high altitude determines PLA units structured to operate as mountain units. Only on the east coast, in view of the Taiwan contingency, as well as China's fear of attack by the United States, has China deployed offensively oriented units.

Kazakhstan is set to become vital to China's energy security. In the first decade of the 21st Century, China was buying Kazakh oilfields and companies. If there were to be a problem with the flow of oil to China, its doctrinal philosophy of 'active defence' (see the Introduction of this thesis) means that the Chinese government will launch a preventative or pre-emptive strike to ensure the security of the state and its assets. The PLA is mechanising much of its army and is creating at least two powerful armour heavy mechanized corps modelled after the 1980s Soviet Operational Manoeuvre Groups, which are designed for both breakthrough and exploitation roles in an offensive operation. Too heavy for amphibious deployment against Taiwan or for operations in China's tropical areas, the corps is designed to ensure China's future energy security. The force, using Xinjiang province as its springboard, would quickly overrun the defences of

940 . 'Zhongguo zengqiang jixiehua bubing shi gonglji nengli', *op. cit.*, p. 12.

941. *Ibid.*

any Central Asian state and would then be able to secure relevant oilfields. The PLA has already announced its readiness to go to the next stage of its development and ‘forge a strong military force powerful enough to take on important missions on the basis of China's economic development’.⁹⁴²

The Chinese government views stability as essential to China's future growth and the PLA Army group in Shenyang will have one of the armour heavy corps to ensure the stability of China's heavily industrialised northwest. An unstable nuclear-armed North Korea would be viewed with alarm in Beijing, and the economic and military power of a unified Korea on its north-western border could be seen as another reason for intervention. The armour heavy corps could easily cross the Yalu and quickly occupy large parts of the country, as most of North Korea's weapons systems are on the border with South Korea.

To adapt to informationized warfare and to enable more rapid decision-making on the battlefield, the PLA has decided to increase the number of army corps by removing the division and instead adopting a three-level command system of corps, brigade and battalion.⁹⁴³ This has already occurred in many ex-Soviet countries, for example, the Ukraine. The People's Liberation Army is based on the old Soviet triangular model that uses a corps, division and regimental command and control structure. The regiment acts as the basic tactical unit, subordinate to the division as it lacks sufficient staff officers and command powers within its headquarters to act independently of the division. In a modern brigade, the company is the tactical unit. Going from a Russian style corps and divisional structure requires few changes at the battalion or even regimental level, but it does mean a radical change in command and control arrangements as the brigade is expected to act independently once committed into operations.

942 . Sun Xuefu, ‘Forge a military force commensurate with China's international status’, *PLA Daily Online*, 28 April 2006, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 28 April 2006.

943 . ‘Military to be restructured: Paper’, *Xinhuanet*, 13 July 2005, <http://www.xinhuanet/.com.sn/english> accessed 14 July 2006

In the late 1990s, the PLA decided to abandon its triangular structure at the higher levels in favour of a square organisation of two armoured and two mechanized brigades in its heavy combined army group (corps). The Group Army (heavy) is composed of one armoured and three mechanized divisions, an air defence brigade, an artillery brigade, a helicopter group (*dadui*), an engineering regiment, headquarters unit and a logistical support unit. The divisions are in the classic triangular structure with three companies to a battalion, three battalions to a regiment and three regiments to a division. Even the armoured and mechanized companies have a structure of three platoons and one headquarters vehicle. This force totals around 70,000 and personnel with around 600 MBTs, over 300 pieces of artillery of 122 mm calibre and above and more than 1,000 various armoured vehicles in support.⁹⁴⁴

In contrast, the proposed new structure which, besides two mechanized and two armoured brigades, has a brigade each of aviation, artillery, and air defence and engineers; each composed of four battalions, and a battalion for chemical defence, communications, corps level air defence and electronic warfare. The new PLA armoured corps is envisioned to have a total of 500 ZTZ-96 or ZTZ-99 MBTs; 586 ZDB-97 tracked infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), 126 155mm PLZ-45 self-propelled guns; 96 120mm turreted self-propelled mortars; 36 Type 89 30 tube 122mm and 27 300mm 12 tube A-100 multiple rocket launchers; 12 DF-15D tactical missiles and 48 attack, 18 multipurpose and 60 transport helicopters and around 2,000 other types of vehicles.⁹⁴⁵ Its peacetime establishment is 22,180, which rises to approximately 23,000 in wartime.⁹⁴⁶ The Type

944 . Wang Hui, *ZTZ-98 zhuzhantanke zhuangjia*, Inner Mongolia Cultural Publishing Company, 2002, p. 74.

945 . By comparison the US Army Division 86 Aviation Brigade fielded 134 aircraft including 48 attack helicopters. Wilson, John B. *Maneuver and Firepower: The Evolution of Divisions and Separate Brigades*, Center of Military History U.S. Army, Washington D.C., 1998, p. 386.

946 . Wang Hui, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

99s and ZDB 97s will be the core of the corps C4I with battlefield management systems down to the individual vehicle.

General Ogarkov tried to create two similar sized corps OMGs in the Soviet Army in Germany against NATO in the 1980s, comprising four brigades with a total of 415 MBTs, advanced IFVs, and 96 152 mm SP artillery guns supported by heavy MRL and tactical ballistic missile brigades. They were never fully established due to their cost and the realisation that it was a target-rich environment for NATO PGMs. A contemporary US Armoured or Mechanized Infantry Division has three manoeuvre brigades instead of four, and contains 10 mechanized or armoured battalions and an aviation brigade of 134 aircraft including 48 attack helicopters.⁹⁴⁷

The biggest change in the corps structure may be found within the company structure. Under the prevailing structure there are three AFVs (tanks or armoured personnel carriers) per platoon, then three platoons per company and a headquarters vehicle to make 10 AFVs per company. In the new structure there are now four AFVs per platoon and two AFVs at the company headquarters to give a total of 14 AFVs.⁹⁴⁸ Not only is the company now larger by four vehicles, it can still operate as a viable manoeuvre element with casualties, whereas vehicle platoons have difficulty providing fire and movement with two vehicles. It also gives the platoon headquarters its own vehicle, allowing elements such as a forward observer or engineer teams to be attached to the platoon for the first time. This enables the platoon to be the lowest tactical unit whereas before it was the company. An IFV infantry squad would be composed of one NCO leading two squads of three men equipped with one squad automatic weapon and two rifles, one equipped with an under barrel grenade launcher. Compared to the normal PLA infantry company, there are two fewer soldiers per squad and no separate fire support squad at the company level. At the battalion level there are no supporting anti-aircraft,

947 . Kedzior, Richard W. *Endurance and Evolution: The U.S. Army Division in the Twentieth Century*, Rand Publications, Santa Monica, 2000, p. 37.

948 . *Ibid.*

communications or anti-armour platoons. The supporting weapons would be in the IFVs and in the battalion's six 120 mm self-propelled mortars.

The new tracked infantry fighting vehicle is heavily influenced by the Russian BMP-3 and uses a turret based on the Russian BMP-3. The hull is larger than the BMP-3 and is matched to the Russian 120 mm 'Nona' turret to provide the new 120 mm self-propelled mortar.⁹⁴⁹ Gun-launched anti-tank guided weapons are already in service on selected Type 99 MBTs and will be used on command versions of the new ZDB-97 IFV and Type 99 MBTs.⁹⁵⁰ In the new armoured and mechanized infantry companies, which use four vehicles in the platoon instead of the current three, it means five vehicles out of 14 will be able to use the missiles. In 2008 their maximum range was restricted to 800 metres at night due to the limitations of the vehicle's night vision equipment.⁹⁵¹

China's western periphery contains the world's largest mountain ranges and high desert plateaus. The forces in Tibet and Xinjiang require lighter forces as this type of terrain is unsuited to large heavy armoured forces. The PLA has equipped its mountain brigades in Tibet and the Sixth Independent Division in Xinjiang, which was the first mechanized infantry division to be deployed at this height, with wheeled armoured fighting vehicles.⁹⁵² In Tibet and Xinjiang the People's Liberation Army has fielded the Chinese WZ550 four-wheeled, WZ 551 six-wheeled and WZ 525, eight-wheeled family of armoured fighting vehicles. Similar in concept to the Stryker light armoured vehicle, various versions are available from a basic armoured personnel carrier with a small open turret mounting a 12.7 mm machine gun to an eight-wheeled version with a 122 mm

949 . One hundred complete turrets were purchased from Russia in the late 1990s. Karyakin & Moiseyev, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

950 . 'PRC Deploys Bastion Missile to Field, Cooperates with Belarus on 1K13', *Kanwa Defence Review*, March 01, 2005.

951 . *Ibid.*

952 . 'PLA Dispatched 10 Additional Divisions to the Sino-Afghan Border', *World Journal*, 7 October 2001.

howitzer in an enclosed turret.⁹⁵³ In Xinjiang and Tibet these vehicles are organised along the lines of a cavalry battalion, similar to the US Army's Stryker combat brigades.

In both areas PLA infantry operate the WZ551A APC with its one-man high elevation turret mounting 25 mm automatic cannon. This turret allows the engaging of targets high in the mountains or in buildings and the performance of the 25 mm round against light armour gives a measure of security if they were to suddenly face light tanks. The Nona 120 mm mortar turret has been fitted to the WZ551 and this version could be available for the fire support role.⁹⁵⁴ Given the US experiences with the development of the Stryker 105mm MGS, the 100 mm tank destroyer version of the WZ551 would strain the transmission, suspension and power plant and the effect on the hull on firing would be tremendous. The vehicle's performance will be degraded by the rarefied air and steep hill and mountain roads of Tibet and Xinjiang.

Light infantry operate in the jungle and the paddy fields of Guangzhou and Yunnan where the terrain restricts the use of armour. When operating in networked paddy fields the PLA plans for armour to move at the optimistic speed of 6-10 km/hr and infantry and towed artillery at 2.5-3 km/hr.⁹⁵⁵ The PLA has not left the light infantry bereft of tanks, having the Type 62 light tank equipped with an 85 mm gun. Introduced in the early 1960s they equipped armoured regiments supporting light infantry and were prominent in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese War. The major problems of light infantry, a lack of sustainability and firepower, readily became apparent in this conflict with the PLA suffering heavy casualties. The Type 62 was particularly vulnerable to rocket propelled grenades and automatic cannon fire from anti-aircraft artillery. The Type 62 is being

953 . 'Zhongguo 122 haomi llunsi zixing ludanpao', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2002 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 181 Qi, pp. 6 & 7; 'WMZ551B Zhongguo xinxing zhuangjia shushongche', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2003 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 185 Qi, pp. 11 & 12.

954 . 'Zhongguo 120mm zixing paijipao xitong', *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheliang*, 2002 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 197 Qi, Photograph facing page one.

955 . 'Shuiwang daotiandi jingong zuozhan(shang)', *Qing Bingqi*, 2005 Niandi, 10 Qi, (shang), Zhongdi 208 Qi, p. 49.

replaced in PLA service by the ZTZ-63A amphibious tank and WZ551 six-wheeled light armoured fighting vehicle with a 100mm gun. The PLA has traded armour for mobility and firepower, as both vehicles can be readily penetrated frontally by heavy machine gun fire.

The PLA is forging ahead in creating the aviation brigade and airmobile formations. These, along with its attendant light mechanized infantry and armour, can be used for long-range outflanking manoeuvres, to seize strategic targets like airfields and oil fields, and to stabilize a situation before it becomes uncontrollable, such as peacemaking. The problem in 2008 was that the proposed aviation brigade contained more attack helicopters than the PLA currently had. Initially, the brigade would be equipped with modified versions of the Z-9G helicopters were seen equipped with gun pods, anti-tank and lightweight air-to-air missiles.⁹⁵⁶ This, however, cannot be regarded as a substitute for dedicated attack helicopters like the Eurocopter Tiger or AH-64 Apache.

The PLA has the 'light mechanized infantry experimental group' in Sichuan, which is part of the Chengdu Military Region.⁹⁵⁷ An airmobile trials unit, in Western terminology, the group is developing and testing new joint concepts and equipment required for the new corps aviation brigade. The PLA refers to it as a 'newborn baby' of integrated training and is an 'integrated entity of operational elements such as intelligence and reconnaissance, navigation and positioning, three-dimensional mobility, fire strikes, command and control and battlefield management. In other words, it is organised as an independent task force. Eighty percent of the unit's equipment is new or modernised and is not available to other PLA units. This unit has quadrupled the firepower of the unit from which it was formed, with only 30 percent of the original personnel. New equipment includes a high mobility amphibious vehicle with an automated fire control

956. 'Photograph on the inside cover', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2003 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 189 Qi; 'Da zaozong hezhao zhangxinglui hangbudui', *Xiandai junshizao* (CONMILIT), 2004 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 325 Qi, pp. 10 & 11.

957. *Zhanqi Bao*, 16 February 2006.

system equipped with cannons and missiles. The unit therefore relies on manoeuvrability, surprise and advanced fire control systems to bring its firepower to bear.

The unit is entirely airmobile—all vehicles are able to be slung underneath or stored inside the unit's helicopters. Unless the PLA Air Force's (PLAAF) heavy-lift helicopters were transferred to the PLA's army aviation force, this implies that the unit is a joint PLA/PLAAF unit. It uses a variety of vehicles that would not be out of place at a NATO airborne meeting in the early 1980s. The vehicles shown resemble the British argocat 8 x 8 light vehicle; German Kraka 640 4 x 2 light airborne weapon carrier and the M274 Mechanical Mule.⁹⁵⁸ Their fast attack vehicles are similar to the modified Chenoweth Racing Products FAVs bought by the US Army for the Nineth Infantry Division in the early 1980s.

Its 4 x 4 weapons carrier is the PLA's answer to the Landrover used by military forces worldwide. It is 4 metres long by 2.09 metres wide and a height of 2.21 metres including the roll bar/weapons mount. Its maximum speed is 110 km/hr. It has a normal combat weight of 1.7 tons, a maximum combat weight of 1.95 tons, and can carry between four and seven men depending on the variant. The standard variant has a JQY88 5.8 mm machine gun on the front passenger's side, which can be replaced by a QLZ87 35 mm lightweight machine gun and a QJZ89 12.7 x 108 mm machine gun firing from the roll bar mount.

Another variant mounts a Chinese copy of the Russian 82 mm 2B9 *Vasilek* automatic mortar on a low recoil mount. Fire support in the airborne trials unit is provided by large 4 x 4 wheeled vehicles mounting various weapons. Besides a towed modular lightweight 107 mm multiple rocket launcher, one variant mounts a nine-tube 107 mm multiple rocket launcher at the left rear of the chassis. Another has a copy of the Russian 82 mm 2B9 on a soft recoil mount known as the *Tie Ying* 82 mm rapid mortar. Besides man portable surface-to-air missiles, air defence is provided by 4 x 4 vehicles equipped with a

958 . Foss, Christopher S. *Jane's Combat Support Equipment, 1978-79*, Jane's Yearbooks, London, 1978, pp.239 & 240, 252 & 253, 259 & 260.

twin 23 mm AAA gun with an elevation ranging from -10^0 to $+52^0$ and capable of turning 360 degrees.

Chinese airborne personnel are being equipped with modern Chinese infantry weapons like the Model 92 pistol, Model 95 assault rifle and squad automatic weapon, the QLZ87 35 mm AGL and the Model 89 120 mm anti-tank rocket launcher.⁹⁵⁹ Like all light airborne mechanized units the vehicles lack armour and weather protection, relying on speed, small size and their cross-country ability to survive.

In the late 1990s Russia supplied numerous military paratroop systems to the PLA including a batch of 2S23 self-propelled 120 mm mortars and 50 BMD-3 airborne infantry fighting vehicles. As these were sold by the Russian Army, China reported only one vehicle purchased to the United Nations Register.⁹⁶⁰ Russia did not acknowledge the sale either.

The ZDB05 airborne combat vehicle has a maximum road speed of 68 km/hr, a maximum speed in water of 6 km/hr, and a maximum road range of 500km. It uses a 30 mm chain gun - not 25 mm as previously reported. The gun can fire up to 300 rounds per minute with a maximum effective range of 4 kilometers and a maximum altitude of 2500 metres. There are 125 armour piercing (AP) and 225 high explosive (HE) rounds in the turret and a further 80 AP and 120 HE rounds in the hull. There is a coaxial Model 86 7.62 mm co-axial machine with 1,000 rounds available and two sets of triple 76 mm smoke dischargers either side of the turret that have a maximum effective range of 100 metres and a maximum range of 120 – 150 metres. Four infantrymen can be squeezed into the rear of the hull, making this the PLA's BMD-2. PLA airborne units also use WZ 551 six-wheeled armoured vehicle equipped with the Russian Nona 120 mm mortar

959. Yingjichangkong __ zhongguo konggjiangbing zhuangbei daquan (yi)', *Qing Bingqi*, 2006 Niandi, 7 xia Qi, Zhongdi 227 Qi, pp. 12 – 15.

960. *Ibid.* p. 36.

turret. Artillery support is provided by the Model 86 122 mm towed gun which is a copy of the Russian D-30.

The ZDB05 airborne combat vehicle was unveiled during the Sino-Russian *Peace Mission 2005* joint exercise. The placing of a missile with its explosive rocket motor and warhead to fire occurred in exercises and parades with inert rounds. The Russians never had the ATGMs on their BMP-1 and BMP-2 loaded on their launchers on operations in case they were set off by enemy fire. They did not want approximately one kilogram of explosive exploding on the barrel or on top of the turret.⁹⁶¹ As for fire support, the vehicle is too light to support heavy tubed weapons and would have to settle for ATGMs. The Soviets tried to arm their equivalent, the BMD, with a 122 mm howitzer and when that failed, the 120 mm ‘Nona’ turret. Both failed due to the strain on the chassis.⁹⁶²

By the latter years of the first decade of the 21st century, the Beijing and Shenyang Military Area Commands’ main force mechanized infantry divisions conducted exercises, developing the use of units as ‘building blocks’ to create battle groups. Further, units from these two commands were used to develop the PLA’s new high altitude and urban warfare doctrines, the former with units in Xinjiang.⁹⁶³

To ensure that the PLA is able to perform under informationized conditions, it has invested in realistic training. Nevertheless, considerable resources to improve command and control (C2) have yet to bear fruit due to problems that have been exposed during training. The 2005 joint C2 exercise linked command centres and units from Beijing with those in the Guangzhou, Shengyang and Chengdu Military Regions (MRs). The exercise was commanded from the Guangzhou MR headquarters ‘to work out the deployment and cooperation between the Army, Navy and Air Force when ‘separated by hundreds of

961 . Mal’ginov, Viktor. ‘BMP-2’, *M-Khobbi*, 3/2004, Issue 49, p. 23.

962 . Sayenko, Maksim. ““Workhorse” for the Airborne”, *M-Khobbi*, 9/2004, Issue 55, p. 33.

963 . ‘Zhongguo zengqiang jixiehua bubing shi gonglji nengli’, *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2006 Niandi, 11Qi, Zhongdi 249, p. 12.

kilometres' in the Guangzhou region'.⁹⁶⁴ 'To ensure the joint training command is up to speed', other articles noted about this exercise and others:

[V]arious arms and services and various units are linked to each other via networks with their equipment capable of effective coordinated operation . . . integrating military with locality and field locations with fixed locations . . . they set up multiple sets of fibre optic transmission systems and used the method of integrated platforms, integrated networks and integrated applications to connect the major command systems in the cooperation zone, thus ensuring that commanders at all levels are able to transmit and receive telegrams, data and images real-time at their levels of command.⁹⁶⁵

The importance of training the C2 systems in the Guangzhou MR is relected in the MR's status as the headquarters responsible for the South China Sea and for Taiwan. The C2 exercise demonstrated that the different commands were not using the same standard operating procedures, thereby creating a major problem for C2 in potential scenarios. In response, Hu Jintao and the Central Military Commission have reinforced the need for standard operating procedures and have called for all headquarters units to read and adopt the new regulations for operation.⁹⁶⁶ This exercise exposed flaws that previous artificial command post exercises did not. In the past, a simulated enemy's victory would have caused problems for the losing command staff's promotion prospects. For instance, the *Peace Mission 2005* exercise held with the Russians had been so stage managed that the exercise lost any relevance for operational training except for the TU-95MS cruise missile carriers, and the continued training of airdropping procedures.

964 . *Zhanshi Bao*, 11 January 2005

965 . Taken from a series of articles in *Zhanshi Bao*, 7 – 11 January 2005; *Jiefang Bao*, 3 March 2006; and *Qiangjin Bao*, 15 October 2005.

966 . 'Basic regulations on military work and headquarters building under informationalization conditions', PLA Daily online, 20 March 2006, accessed 27 March 2007

With the PLA developing its own version of the 1980s Soviet Operational Manoeuvre Groups and the US Army's mechanized and armoured divisions in Desert Storm, training in command and control and battle management systems will be intensified.⁹⁶⁷ The structure of the PLA's new self-propelled gun (SPG) battalion, itself a copy of the US Army's Paladin SPG battalion, is an indication of the PLA's increasing reliance on automated fire control systems linked with signals intelligence and unmanned air vehicles.⁹⁶⁸ This will not only require additional specified training but also the extension of the length of military service, an ever increasing reliance on volunteers or an increase in personnel wages. This informationized training is now being emphasized with four integrations—Goal Orientated Integration, Integrate Peacetime and Wartime Needs, Integrate High and Low Technologies and Integrate Military and Local Resources.⁹⁶⁹ Joint training was the priority emphasis for the PLA in 2006 to enable force modularisation—the building of battle groups. New structures for the command and control of joint operations have been developed and have come into service.

In the Chengdu MR, the PLA for the past two years has been developing joint operational training to develop new methods of fighting under informationized conditions. Many units in the PLA do not have the new organizational structures or equipment to exploit these new systems as they are in 'a mechanized or semi-mechanized state with low informatized systems'.⁹⁷⁰ This statement reveals that the new brigade structures have not yet been fully implemented throughout the PLA.

To impart these new concepts to the armoured units, the PLA has centralized all initial and

967 . Andrew, M. 'Tuo Mao: The PLA's New Armour Heavy Corps', *GI Zhou Newsletter*, Number 36, 11 November 2005, pp. 1- 6. The article cited contains 32 references about the new structure.

968 . 'Zhongguo PLZ45 155haomi huoqiangjia jingxinbianhua', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2006 Niandi, 1Qi, Zhongdi 219, pp. 28 – 31.

969. Zheng Dangkuan. 'Perseverance in Promoting Informationization', *Qianwei Bao*, 18 January 2006, p. 4.

970 . Wang Jianmin. 'Footprints of the Forerunner' *Zhangqi Bao*, 16 February 2006.

advanced training for armoured and mechanized troops in the joint armoured training base in the Beijing military area. The *PLA Daily* reported in 2006 that ‘in the past few years, this training base has turned out more than 60,000 armoured combatants who are now playing an active role in the PLA's three services.’⁹⁷¹ The unit's curriculum was completely revamped in line with the PLA's new informationized warfare strategy, providing new training outcomes for the ‘new-style armoured combatant’.⁹⁷²

To ensure that its field units continue this training, the PLA has developed and tested a computer-based ‘fighting capability evaluation system’. This enables exercise evaluations to be conducted ‘quantitatively’, instead of subjectively, speeding up the training cycle. Reports that previously took more than 10 personnel working one week to produce are now ready in 40 minutes using just a few staff.⁹⁷³ The reports can now be transmitted to commanders in Beijing almost immediately after the exercise ends.

In March 2005, the PLA conducted a Battle Management C4I exercise in the Tianshan Mountains and the Talikmakan Desert of Xinjiang to develop and test its doctrine for the new corps and brigade structures.⁹⁷⁴ Involving more than 10,000 personnel and 1,000 vehicles, the exercise saw an army battle group formed with a headquarters having four subordinate combat groups that were not necessarily manoeuvre groups. The exercise concentrated on the joint tactical group, which was responsible for operations. Joint operations involving aircraft and artillery strikes in conjunction with offensive electronic warfare were practised. The armoured forces involved in the exercise operated with armed helicopters. All these aircraft movements and artillery missions, including both tube artillery and multiple rocket launchers, would have also tested the PLA's ground and air

971 . Wu Shunxiang and Zhang Kunping, ‘New type of armored combatants trained for three Services’, *PLA Daily Online*, 4 April 2006, <http://www.xinhuanet/.com.sn/english> accessed 4 April 2006

972 . *Ibid.*

973 . Li Jingwei. ‘Regiment of Shenyang MAC develops ‘fighting capability evaluation system’’, *PLA Daily Online*, 13 February 2006, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 14 February 2006.

974 . Wei Chun. ‘Battle on the Sea of Death Battlefield’, *PLA Pictorial*, 1 April 2005, pp. 28 – 31.

force's joint doctrine in airspace control. The exercise validated these concepts and demonstrated that the PLA was able to conduct modern offensive operations on its borders away from its logistics bases. The capability of the PLA to operate away from its logistic bases and having the core of an intervention force based in Xinjiang will not be lost on China's neighbours.

During the exercise Special Forces elements were inserted by helicopter and parachute and provided targeting data for strategic bombers and tactical ballistic missiles of the Second Artillery force. This means that the DF-15 theatre ballistic missiles in the corps will still be under the control of the Second Artillery and not the corps commander. It can send its payload 600 kilometres and this poses a problem for the both the corps and theatre commanders. The command and control of China's ballistic missile force has come under some debate inside the PLA. In the late 1990s control of the PLA's short-range ballistic missiles was delegated to the group armies.⁹⁷⁵ With the creation of the corps as the major combat group, this has created a command and control problem for the use of TBMs. The 600-kilometre range DF-15 would now come under a corps commander instead of the control of the military region commander. This is seen as unlikely as theatre ballistic missiles would come back under control of the Second Artillery Force as a recent exercise in the Talikmakan Desert showed.

There is certainly a mismatch between the PLZ-45 155mm self-propelled gun with a maximum range of 40 kilometres and the 300 mm A-100 multiple rocket launcher with its 50-kilometre minimum and 100-kilometre maximum range, and the 600 kilometre range DF-15.⁹⁷⁶ The A-100 is the PLA's new long range MRL. Based on the Russian SMERCH 9K58, the rocket is 7.236 metres long, 300 mm in diameter, and weighs 840 kilograms with a 235 kilogram warhead. Its maximum range is reported at 120 kilometres and it uses

975 . Wang Hui, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

976 . Foss, C.F. 'NORINCO 155mm 45 calibre self-propelled gun-howitzer **PLZ45**', *Jane's Armour And Artillery 2005-2006*.

a Chinese copy of the Russian MAZ-543M 8 x 8-wheeled vehicle.⁹⁷⁷ The DF-15 with its 500 kilogram warhead is a theatre asset and permission to fire is unlikely to be given to a corps commander except in an area like Xinjiang where a division on operations can be spread over 1000 kilometres. It is, after all, an expensive way to deliver the equivalent of a Mk83 high explosive bomb if it misses. The US Army uses the ATACMS system which has a range of between 128 kilometres and 300 kilometres depending on the variant.⁹⁷⁸ China has recently developed the B611 *Zhenmu* tactical missile system, which better fits the needs of its new corps.⁹⁷⁹ With a range of 150 kilometres and equipped with cluster or high explosive warheads it enables a corps commander to strike deep without having to request longer range weapons from the theatre commander. The launch vehicle uses a North-Benz 8 x 8 Type 2629 chassis and is equipped with twin canister launched missiles, which can quickly be replaced after firing. This would enable the corps commander to have command and control of his own deep strike assets that would not be available if a new short-range ballistic missile system is not procured.

In high altitude operations, the PLA is moving towards the Russian concept of Reconnaissance – Combat Operations (RBD) to defeat the PRC's, and the SCO's three 'evils'- 'terrorism', 'separatism' and 'extremism'.⁹⁸⁰ This involves the extensive use of signals intelligence, Special Forces and helicopters supported by ready reaction forces and artillery to provide blocking forces and prosecute attacks.⁹⁸¹ Special Forces reconnaissance teams provide intelligence information for larger forces and provide fire coordination for long range fire support. The PLA is already developing these forces as part of its drive towards 'informationization', especially for its high altitude forces on China's western periphery.

977 . 'Zhuhai hongzhan zhongchan xinzhuanbeimantan', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2005 Niandi, 1 Qi, Zhongdi 207, p. 69.

978 . Lockheed Martin – Missiles and Fire Control. *ATACMS Block IA and ATACMS Block II*

979 . Jiang Jianping. 'Tochka and Railroad Ties', *Kanwa Defence Review*, 01 Dec 2004, pp. 34 – 37.

980 . Kiselev, Valeriy. 'Acquired – Destroyed', *Armeyskiy Sbornik*, Number 8-2001, pp. 35 – 39.

981 . 'Eagle Owls' Over Chechnya', *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, Number 20, 21- 27 June 2002, p. 2.

PLA army aviation units have Z-9G helicopters equipped with thermal imaging sensors and fire control equipment, with artillery units having data link equipment to provide near real time fire support. This follows the Russian experience in Chechnya where Russian forces have used attack and other helicopters equipped with imaging infra-red seekers and real time data links to identify Chechen insurgent positions. Further the PLA has used their first airmobile regiment with its Z-9G helicopters in Xinjiang to develop high altitude tactics and operating procedures. These can mount cannon pods, and air-to-air and anti-tank guided missiles.⁹⁸²

PLA light infantry are now being trained and equipped to operate in their traditional roles of screening, flank protection and jungle and high altitude operations over larger areas than before, with elite units now becoming the PLA's choice for conversion into airmobile units. New rations enable the PLA to conduct extended operations without having to rely on the civilian population for rationing and light infantry are now able to conduct covert operations without compromising themselves by needing to replenish rations. Their lack of supporting weapons, when outside their helicopters and light armoured vehicles, means that their need for access to supporting forces is still necessary as they can quickly become overwhelmed by conventional forces. A light armoured 4 x 4 vehicle has been developed to provide a vehicle capable of being used as a troop and weapons carrier, as well as for command and control and logistics roles.⁹⁸³

Being the poor cousin of combat arms, logistics has suffered from inadequate funding since the inception of the People's Liberation Army. The reorganizing of units into brigades means that logistics had to be up dated. The General Logistics Department (GLD) has embarked on the modernization of its combat logistics capability which, when completed, will enable sustained operations on China's periphery and beyond its borders.

982 . 'Da zaozong hezhao zhangxinglui hangbudui', *Xiandai junshizao* (CONMILIT), 2004 Niandi, 2 Qi, Zhongdi 325 Qi, pp. 10 & 11.

983 . 'Zhongguo QL550 qingxing lunzhuangjiache', *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2006 Niandi, 7 Qi, Zhongdi 225 Qi, pp. 23 – 25.

A recent exercise by the GLD and the joint Sino-Russian exercise in August 2005 revealed the direction of, and recent improvements to, PLA combat logistics and highlighted areas needing improvement.⁹⁸⁴ These include improved combat uniforms and personal protective equipment, the need to develop high-mobility transport and modular equipment, and better systemisation of the logistics chain. Supplying personnel with adequate food supplies in the field also received special mention.

To enable sustained operations in the field without the need for re-supply, the PLA has introduced the 05 series of pre-packaged field rations.⁹⁸⁵ Ring pull cans are available containing such delicacies as seafood, bird, fruit, green vegetables and meat with rice and soup bases available in individual soft foil pouches. MCF-240 240g ‘military compressed food’ (‘iron ration’) blocks are also available in a halal version. These are heated in a flameless heater pouch similar to the one in the US military’s MREs and can heat meals up to 60°C.⁹⁸⁶ For the squad there are 10-man boxed rations as well as the individual rations mentioned earlier. As noted above, PLA forces on extended operations can now eat well without having to forage off the population.

Until recently, providing personnel with food during military operations has been largely dependent on the provincial militia. This has been a huge problem for units operating on China’s periphery, and the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict exposed all the problems that occur when relying on the militia for logistics support. Ad-hoc at best, the logistics chain broke down and struggled to supply even modest amounts of food to the front line. Simply put, the PLA logistics chain had not been improved since the Korean War. Units in mountainous and remote areas have suffered from a lack of fresh food; the

984 . Bao Weidong and Liu Mingxue . ‘All-army quartermaster equipment inspection yields rich fruits’, *PLA Daily Online*, 25 September 2005 accessed 26 September 2005.

985. ‘Zhandouli zhiyuan wojun junyong shipin zonghentan (xia)’, *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2006 Niandi, 6 Qi, Zhongdi 224 Qi, pp. 53 – 55.

986 . ‘Zhandouli zhiyuan wojun junyong shipin zonghentan (xia)’, *Bingqi Zhishi*, 2006 Niandi, 6 Qi, Zhongdi 224 Qi, pp. 53 – 55.

provision of suitable and standardized meals throughout the country still does not occur.⁹⁸⁷ To improve nutritional levels, the GLD has directed messes that ‘a cup of soymilk and an egg be provided for each serviceman at breakfast.’ Company messes were also directed to ‘prepare fruit for servicemen two to three times a week if conditions permit’.⁹⁸⁸ Compared with a Chinese soldier in the Korean War, the standard and quantity of food has, in fact, decreased and is obviously long overdue for improvement.⁹⁸⁹ In established messes, catering for more than 500 personnel now includes electronic ovens, freezers, and special machines to make noodles and beancurd.⁹⁹⁰ Typically, rear echelon units have looked after themselves first, as the infantry messes are staffed at the company level and will thus have to wait for these improvements.

In the field, new mobile kitchen vehicles have been introduced. One vehicle enables four cooks to prepare four different hot meals and a soup for 300 people in less than one hour.⁹⁹¹ The long-held tradition of squads eating from the same rice bowl was only discontinued in 2003 due to the problems of spreading diseases such as SARS, raising questions about the PLA’s prior commitment to containing disease and contamination. More importantly, new field water purification and environmental health equipment has been introduced. The PLA’s Red Army Division used in OPFOR training was the first unit to use new field water purifying equipment, field showers that utilize solar energy for heating and other vehicles to assist in field environmental health measures.⁹⁹² Once

987 . Guan Daxue and Fan Juwei. ‘PLA cooks up new menus to beef up soldiers’, *PLA Daily on-line*, 6 November 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 6 November 2005.

988 . Guan Daxue and Fan Juwei. ‘Making dishes more nutritious for officers and men’, *PLA Daily on-line*, 3 November 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 4 November 2005.

989 . In December 1952 the daily ration was 900gm of cereal, 670gm of meat, vegetables and oils with 180gm of condiments (eg soy sauce, salt, spices), Shrader, C.R. *Communist Logistics in the Korean War*, Greenwood Press, Westport, 1995, pp. 94 & 95.

990 . Guan Daxue and Fan Juwei, *op.cit.*, 6 November 2005.

991 . Ding Shunguo and Zhao Gonghu. Military unit develops modern cooking equipment for field operation, *PLA Daily Online*, 4 January 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 5 January 2005.

these are available throughout the PLA, it will enable sustained operations without having to depend on the local population for rationing or water.

In the area of battlefield engineering, the PLA has introduced an array of vehicles to enable and enhance battlefield mobility. For gap and river crossings the PLA employs two types of pontoon bridges: Type 84 bridge-laying tanks, and truck-mounted scissors-type folding bridges that incorporate built-in pylons.⁹⁹³ For initial crossings there are motorised small rigid inflatable boats and an amphibious four-wheel drive vehicle, a near duplicate of the United States Second World War amphibious jeep.⁹⁹⁴ By placing a detachable bow and stern equipped with an outboard motor on Type 85 and Type 89 armoured personnel carriers, PLA engineers can quickly provide light armoured vehicles for opposed river crossings. The replacing of the Type 62 light tank with the ZTS-63A will enable reconnaissance units to cross river barriers and paddy fields with more easily.

The GJT211A armoured bulldozer provides for rapid breaching minefields and battlefield engineering tasks.⁹⁹⁵ Equivalent to the M9 Armoured Combat Earthmover it is equipped with a large bulldozer blade in the front and a tray over the rear of the hull that houses the Type 84A rocket launched mine-clearing explosive hose system. To ensure all weather high-altitude support, the PLA regularly operates in late autumn in Xinjiang in extreme weather conditions. In October 2005 an engineer regiment of the Xinjiang Military Area Command conducted a high-altitude cold weather exercise at 4,000 meters in the Kunlun Mountains.⁹⁹⁶ Comprising over 1,000 men with over 100 pieces of engineering

992 . 'New type of equipment enters service in training', *PLA Daily on-line*, 25 Aug 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 5 January 2005.

993 . 'Dujianghe jingong zuozhan (xia)', *Qing Bingqi*, 2005 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 200, pp. 46 – 49.

994 . 'Dujianghe jingong zuozhan (shang)', *Qing Bingqi*, 2005 Niandi, 8 Qi, Zhongdi 199, pp. 5 – 9.

995 . 'Zhongjia gongcheng baozhung zhangbei', *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheliang*, 2004 Niandi, 12 Qi, Zhongdi 226, pp. 5 - 10.

996 . Sui Jianqiang and Xu Yunjian. 'Engineer regiment of Xinjiang MAC toughens troops in freezing plateau areas', *PLA DailyOnline* 26 October 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 26 October 2005

equipment, the engineers developed new methods for providing engineer support including a rolling device that almost halves the time taken to build a bridge, new methods of camouflage suited to the terrain, and tested a new model front-end loader.⁹⁹⁷

Medical services on the battlefield are being modernized in line with the rest of the PLA. Currently there are three stages of medical service prior to the evacuation of injured personnel to a major army medical facility. The medics collect the patient and provide immediate first aid and transport them to the battalion aid post where they are stabilized before moving on to the field or divisional hospital for early stage treatment of their wounds. With the reorganization of the PLA into a brigade and corps structure, the corps will now contain the early stage treatment facility. The PLA is investing in its battlefield health services with armoured tracked ambulances using both the Type 85 and 89 chassis. The former is armed with a 12.7 mm machine gun and the latter, fully amphibious, is used to transport wounded personnel to and from landing craft or over water crossings.⁹⁹⁸

The extent of PLA needs was demonstrated in August and September 2005 when soldiers deployed to the frontier border areas of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region were given individual medical kits procured by the Party Committee of the Wenshan Military Sub-Command Political Department.⁹⁹⁹ Medical kits should have been standardized and available by the PLA long before 2004, and the kits procured were no improvement on similar kits supplied to PLA soldiers in the 1960s.¹⁰⁰⁰

To cut costs while improving the provision of supplies in the field and in-base areas, the

997 . *Ibid.*

998 . ‘Zhanchang yidong zhuangjia husuo ____ wuzhang yanshide xinxing judaishi jiuhuche’, *Tanke Zhuangjia Cheliang*, 2004 Niandi, 11 Qi, Zhongdi 225 Qi, pp. 5 – 9.

999 . Liu Gengwu and Hu Guangsheng, ‘Wenshan Military Sub-Command issues medicine kits to frontier officers and men’, *PLA Daily on-line*, 16 September 2005 <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 17 September 2005.

1000 . Martin Andrew, *GI Zhou Newsletter*, Number 27, 1 August 2004.

PLA now uses computerized outsourcing and procurement to buy equipment directly from the civilian sector, including tools, stationery, and engineering equipment. A division stationed in the eastern part of Liaoning Province was recently the assembly point for a mock emergency procurement drill staged by the GLD to test the PLA's new computerized procurement system with local suppliers in northeast China.¹⁰⁰¹ The success of the exercise demonstrated that the system was viable and points the way for future 'integrated army-civilian emergency procurement systems'.¹⁰⁰²

The GLD has embarked on a major modernization campaign to bring logistics in the PLA up to the expected level of a modern military force. The larger items required for logistics support on the modern battlefield were under development in 2007, or were coming into service. Within a short-term timeframe, the PLA will be able to conduct sustained independent operations outside China's borders—an activity it has never been able to undertake before, finally acknowledging that logistics is the force multiplier. On mobilization issues, the PLA, like the late Soviet army, keeps the majority of its most modern equipment in store for use in a potential war; earlier versions and only small amounts of the more recent equipment are utilized in training. Although this ensures new equipment during times of mobilization, it also leads to problems of personnel unfamiliarity with the modernized equipment and breakdowns due to poor maintenance. Furthermore, the mass mobilization of modernized military equipment alerts an opponent to one's intentions. The PLA is aware of these problems and in the last three months of 2005, the State National Defense Mobilization Committee issued a series of proposals to incorporate the four integrations in wartime manpower mobilization and to improve upon rapid manpower mobilization systems.¹⁰⁰³

1001 . Zhang Xinzong, Tang Xiangdong. 'Integrated army-civilian procurement system built in northeast China', *PLA Daily on-line*, 26 September 2005, <http://www.chinamil.com.cn> accessed 26 September 2005

1002 . *Ibid.*

1003 . *Zhongguo Guofang Bao*, 21 November 2005; *Zhongguo Guofang Bao*, 12 December 2005. For the four integrations see Wang, *loc. cit.*

Experimenting with Modularity

The influences of *pei shu* ('attaching troops to a subordinate unit') and *zhi shi* (to support), were evident in the PLA's new mechanized infantry division unveiled in 2006, claimed to be two generations ahead of its predecessor.¹⁰⁰⁴ The division is organised and equipped to fight in the form of independent battle groups on mountainous and urban terrain, with equipment being lighter in weight and firepower than those of the PLA's divisions tasked to defend the nation against aggressors with modern main battle tanks. Its theatres of operation are Xinjiang and Tibet where the division's lighter vehicles and support weapons can operate in areas where the communications infrastructure can be described as poor at best. Nine of Asia's main river systems including the Mekong and Brahmaputra originate from the Tibetan Plateau. The Chinese are damming these and hope to be able to divert some of these waters to areas of China currently too dry for agriculture.¹⁰⁰⁵ The governments of India, Bangladesh, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia are concerned and this situation could lead to conflict.¹⁰⁰⁶ The new mechanized infantry division is ideally suited to intervene in the event of attacks on the Tibetan Plateau if other countries try and destroy the dams to increase their water flow. The cavalry brigade/battle group created for the *Peace Mission 2007* exercise mentioned earlier, besides being the first major test of the *pei shu* concept, showed how an easily created composite brigade of light armour and helicopters could be used on the Tibetan Plateau along with the helicopter born light mechanized infantry experimental group.

The division takes some of its structure from the US Army's Division 86 but generally follows the standard PLA triangular organisation. It comprises three mechanized infantry brigades, one tank brigade, one artillery brigade, one air defence brigade, one helicopter

1004 . 'Zhongguo zengqiang jixiehua bubing shi gonglji nengli', *op. cit.*, pp. 12 – 15.

1005 . Deabnath, S. 'Chinese plans to divert Brahmaputra waters', *News from Bangladesh*, 8 May 2007 at www.bangladeshweb.cpm/view.php?hidDate+2007-05-08%HidType=HIG&hidRecord=000000000000159267 accessed 3 November 2007.

1006 . Lynne, M. 'Ethics Be Dammed', *China's Water Projects*, Carnegie Council, 10 January 2007 at www.cceia.org/resources/ethics_online/0005.html accessed 3 November 2007.

wing and a logistics unit directly subordinate to the corps. The division headquarters comprises an engineer battalion, an electronic warfare battalion, a chemical defence battalion, the division headquarters itself (company sized), air defence troop and a guard company for HQ protection. In line with the reorganisation of the PLA company structure there are now four Type 86 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) in the platoon instead of three. There are three mechanized infantry companies to the battalion and three battalions to the brigade with three brigades in the division giving a total of 351 Type 86 IFVs. These are supported by an artillery brigade of 72 122 mm self-propelled guns and a tank battalion of 99 main battle tanks. Type 89 armoured command vehicles are liberally provided throughout the division down to the company level to provide command and control. Intelligence and electronic warfare assets are held at the divisional level in a battalion similar to the US Army's late Combined Electronic Warfare and Intelligence battalion.

The Type 86 infantry fighting vehicle, which is a copy of the Russian BMP-1, has been modified by replacing its existing 73 mm low velocity gun turret with the new Chinese one-man 'universal turret' containing a 30 mm chain gun which has impressive performance against light armour and can disable many main battle tanks.¹⁰⁰⁷ This turret increases the vehicle's anti-armour capability by 2.5 times and significantly increases its survivability with the removal of over 35 kg of easily ignited high explosive.¹⁰⁰⁸ Previously when the BMP-1 was penetrated it blew apart at the weld seams.¹⁰⁰⁹ The new 30 mm turret has greater depression and elevation to enable individual windows and mountain sides to be engaged but is still vulnerable to small arms firing from dominating heights let alone anti-armour rocket launchers. Unfortunately the Type 86 is still easily penetrated on the sides by full power 7.62 mm ball rounds.¹⁰¹⁰ Care will also need to be

1007 . Baryatinskiy, M. 'The Protectress of the Infantry', *M-Khobbi*, 5/2005, Issue 63, pp. 18 & 19.

1008 . *Ibid.* p. 19.

1009 . Babakin, A. 'The Tanks and BMPs Burned in the Hills of Dagestan', *Neavisimoye Obozreniye*, 12-18 March 2004, p. 8.

1010. Mil'ginov, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

taken with its engine as it is a version of the Russian UTD-20, which suffered from power loss and over heating in the thin mountain air of the Chechen hills.¹⁰¹¹

Similarly, the Russians found that main battle tanks like the T-72 performed poorly in the thin air of the Chechen mountains, its automatic transmission and turbo charged diesel engine being unsuited to the mountainous roads and thin air, whereas the T-62 with its less stressed engine and five-speed manual gearbox performed much better but still had trouble on high mountain ranges.¹⁰¹² The Chinese Type 96B and Type 99 use a similar drive train to the T-72, so would suffer the same problem and this is one reason why the PLA still operates the obsolete Type 59 MBT in Xinjiang.¹⁰¹³ Another is that insurgents can be handled with the Type 59 leaving the expensive MBTs like the Type 96B and Type 99 for the armoured brigades.

The other combat tracked vehicles in the division, other than the tanks, are based on the indigenous Type 85/89 armoured fighting vehicles. The support company of the battalion comprises one 100 mm mortar company of 10 vehicles with one mortar per vehicle and a fire control vehicle, an automatic grenade launcher (AGL) platoon in two vehicles with two AGLs each; one anti-tank platoon in two vehicles sharing three anti-tank guided missile systems, normally the Red Arrow. There are a total of 18 Model 85 series armoured vehicles in each brigade, providing 54 anti-tank guided missile systems in the division. There is an air defence platoon of three vehicles with four missiles per vehicle for a total of 12. A division has 27 air defence vehicles and has 108 'Red Tassel' 6 MANPADS available for air defence at any time. They come under operational control of the air defence brigade.

1011 . Nedorezov, V. 'You Can't get There Without Armour', *Armeyskiy Sbornik*, October 2000, p. 50.

1012 . *Ibid.*

1013 . Karyakin, & Moiseyev, *op. cit.*, pp. 52 & 83.

In line with the lighter vehicles, the divisional air defence brigade comprises one battalion of 24 towed 57 mm anti-aircraft guns and one battalion of 18 towed twin 37 mm anti-aircraft guns. An air defence platoon of six Model 95 self-propelled anti-aircraft guns and one of light surface-to-air missiles are attached to the artillery brigade. New to a Chinese division is a helicopter wing which has one squadron of six Z-9G attack helicopters and one transport squadron of six Mi-17 helicopters. This is on light scales and would be expected to be augmented on operations. Logistics is provided by corps assets attached to the battle groups as required.

The vehicles in the new mechanized division are lighter and operate lighter weapons to reduce their logistic footprint. Tactical mobility is improved as more roads and bridges can be used when compared to heavier and larger mechanized divisions. Lighter weights mean refuelling and ammunition resupply is easier. On the few good roads in Xinjiang and Tibet outside of the cities, the ability to operate for extended periods is a greater advantage. In the event of a widespread insurgency or an attack by Indian forces, the appearance of tracked IFVs armed with 30 mm automatic cannon and heavier support weapons would greatly assist the prevailing force of wheeled armoured fighting vehicles operating in Tibet.

If heavier forces are required to augment the new division these have been developed as well. Identified supporting units would be drawn from the Beijing Military Area Command including the Sixth Armoured Division. The Sixth Armoured Division tank company structure is the same as in the tank brigade in the mechanized infantry division. There are two tanks at the battalion headquarters whereas in the mechanized infantry battalion tank brigade there are none. This gives 35 Model 88B or Type 99 main battle tanks per battalion and therefore 105 main battle tanks per brigade. Supporting artillery brigades are equipped with 72 152 mm Model 83 self-propelled guns or the PLZ45 155 mm self-propelled gun being introduced into PLA service. The latter allows the use of the Chinese built version of the Russian KBP laser guided round. The air defence brigade has a battalion of 24 57 mm towed anti-aircraft guns and one of six 'Red Tassel 7' surface-to-air missiles. The 16th Anti-Tank Regiment is more a small battalion in size

containing six 120 mm self-propelled 120 mm *hua tang* (PTZ 89) guns and 18 Red Arrow 8 anti-tank guided missile tank destroyers. These would be light enough to go with the mechanized division in isolated areas.

The Sino-Russian *Peace Mission 2007* exercise held in Russia in August 2007 illustrates the PLA's move towards modular forces. The PLA created a cavalry brigade in what was the first major operational evaluation of the *pei shu* concept. This composite brigade of light armour and helicopters was created from existing forces and was able to conduct light infantry operations, including counter-terrorism, reconnaissance and screening operations across a wide area.

The PLA deployed:

- a. a wheeled mechanized infantry battalion comprising 40 Type 92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles, each mounting an enclosed turret mounted 25 mm automatic cannon, and 15 Type 92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles, each mounting an open turret mounted 12.7 mm machine gun;
- b. two companies of 18 PL02 assault guns, each mounting an enclosed turret with a 100 mm cannon and co-axial 7.62mm machine gun;
- c. one battalion of 16 Z-9W attack helicopters;
- d. one battalion of 16 Mi-17 transport helicopters; and
- e. a company of 12 ZBD05 airborne vehicles mounting a 30 mm automatic cannon.

The 55 Type 92 wheeled infantry fighting vehicles and 18 Type 02 assault guns use the WZ551 six-wheeled armoured chassis.¹⁰¹⁴

1014 . Compiled from :“‘Heping shinming _ 2007” duoguo lianhe kandian jiexi’, *Binggong keji*, Zhongdi

The force was a composite cavalry brigade combining both ground and heliborne assets. This force integrated both mechanized and airmobile infantry, fire support from the 100 mm assault guns and the attack helicopters, reconnaissance from the helicopters and some of the six wheeled IFVs, and logistics from the Mi-17 and 12.7 mm armed Type 92 vehicles.

The deployed Type 92s could transport a mechanized infantry battalion of three companies with the support provided by two companies of the assault guns which is an unusually large amount of *huoli* (firepower) for a mechanized infantry battalion. The Type 92A's would have provided the vehicles for the battalion headquarters and company support weapons. Infantry support weapons deployed include the QBZ87 35mm automatic grenade launcher, PF98 anti-tank rocket launcher and Type 74 backpack flamethrowers. The Mi-17s could lift two infantry companies with their support elements providing the brigade commander with six company level manoeuvre elements. The Z-9W attack helicopters provided aerial reconnaissance, fire support and liaison.

A cavalry brigade like this force could act as the corps reconnaissance and screening force, provide flank protection and act as an assault force to seize high value targets as part of the PLA's new heavy corps.

In the tracked units, the medium reconnaissance vehicle will be the Type 03 amphibious reconnaissance vehicle, which is replacing the Type 62 light tank and the Type 63 amphibious tank in PLA service. It will operate ahead of the main forces; and provide a flanking screen up to four km on the flanks. It is too bulky and large for scouting and

9/2007, pp.18 – 21; 'Kuachu guomin _ zhanxiong feng _ 'heping shinming _ 2007 yanxi zaixian shang', *Tanke zhuangjia cheliang*, 2007 Niandi, 9 Qi, Zhongdi 259, pp. 17– 19; 'Jiefangjun kuaifan zhuangbei liangxiang', *Guoji zhanwang jianduan keji baodao*, 2007 Niandi, 16 Qi, Zhongdi 570, p. 21; 'Wanli furang _ heping shinming _ 2007 fankong junyan', *Hangkong shijie*, 2007 Niandi, 9 Qi, Zhongdi 99, pp. 16 – 23.

close-in reconnaissance which could be performed by the ZBD05 airborne vehicle which besides having a 30mm automatic gun can carry a scout section. This role may have been trialled with aviation and other armoured vehicles by the composite reconnaissance/cavalry brigade in the Peace Mission 2007 joint exercise. The Type 02 100mm assault gun would have provided medium reconnaissance and explains the large number of assault guns compared to the number of armoured personnel carriers and infantry fighting vehicles.

The opportunity costs to equip the heavy corps will be immense and two reduced-size corps could be ready by 2010 by stripping and diverting new equipment away from current PLA divisions. The PLA has certainly moved towards a more modern military force and the new mechanized infantry division shows this new direction. No more tied to an infantry force, the operational art of the PLA has moved from primarily a defensive infantry force to offensive all arms forces operating on large scale operations deep in an enemy's rear. The new mechanized division is designed for operations in Xinjiang and Tibet as the footprint of the vehicles is much lighter as well as the logistics requirements, than heavier armoured units. The mechanized division would be able quickly to enter into Kazakhstan in the event of interruptions to China's oil supplies in the event of a coup or a change of Government sympathetic to the Uyghurs there. The mechanized division, however, lacks helicopters – a situation which will be remedied as the PLA receives newer equipment. The PLA is certainly on its way to the armour heavy corps it has envisaged.

The PLA armoured units in Xinjiang have already increased the readiness of armoured

vehicles and received the PLA's newest equipment, as have forces in Sichuan.¹⁰¹⁵ The upgrading of the Type 86 IFV with the new universal turret with a 30 mm automatic gun enables a leap in firepower and survivability for little cost enabling funds to be expended for the heavier items. It is unlikely that the two would not be fully equipped with armour before 2012, as the US Army experience with its Division-86 heavy unit shows. Nevertheless, the PLA is committed to the new structure and the battle group concept as envisaged under *Pei Shu*.¹⁰¹⁶

The 112th Mechanised Infantry Division, part of the 38th Army Group, uses the Type 99 main battle tank and the Type 86 infantry fighting vehicle. The 3rd and 116th Armoured Divisions, part of the 39th Army Group are to be equipped with 198 Type 99 main battle tanks each, meaning at present they will stay with the three tank platoon structure and two regiments. The 54th Regiment, part of the 127th Mechanised Infantry Division uses the Type 96 main battle tank as do the independent 20th Tank Regiment and 58th Tank Brigade. The 113th Mechanised Infantry Division of the 38th Army Group is equipped with both Type 92 and 92A wheeled infantry fighting vehicles.

These units will be the key to China securing its energy resources in Central Asia with the two armour heavy corps employing their battle groups, being the instrument to do so. They will become China's new strategic weapon.

1015 . Sun Xuefu, op. cit; Wang Jianmin, 'Footprints of the Forerunner', *Zhanqi Bao*, February 16, 2006.

1016. 'Wai kanbao dao Zhongguo jianshe gengduo qingxing jixiehua budui', *Tanke zhangjia cheliang*, 2008 Niandi, 1Qi, Zhongdi 263, pp. 26 – 28.

Cnclusion

The thesis contributes to the field original research demonstrating that the PLA was, in many respects, ahead of contemporary Western forces in the 1930s and 1940s with its theories of operational art and small unit organisation. The United States did not officially recognise the operational level of war until the early 1970s. It is only now that the PLA can envision the types of fast moving operational level armoured thrusts that Tukhachevsky taught PLA commanders in the 1920s and 1930s. It was done to some extent in the Chinese Civil War but the peculiarities of the fighting, the mass defection of entire units being but one example, did not reveal the full extent of the PLA's grasp of the operational level of warfare.

The thesis has argued that the People's Liberation Army's operational art was forged in the period 1928-1937 and was based on the Soviet Union's operational theory which has continued to this day. The two key questions were answered: Where did Mao obtain his ideas for his theory on People's War, and where did the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, the predecessor to People's Liberation Army, learn to wage war?

Whitson's view¹⁰¹⁷ that People's War never existed but was a means of controlling and marshalling the population was expanded upon. Whitson believed, like Jencks, that Liu Bocheng the senior Red Army and later PLA marshal was influenced by his training in Moscow - in the 'integral strategy' model that was in vogue in Moscow in the late 1920s – and which emphasised a professional military, free of commissars' influence in technical plans and operations. In the integral strategy model, military commanders expected the Party to mobilise the masses, not a role for the PLA.¹⁰¹⁸ This is different to what the earlier model, to which the early PLA political officers and leaders were

1017 . Whitson, 1973, *op. cit.*, pp. 468-469.

1018 . *Ibid.*, pp. 468 & 469.

exposed and taught at the Whampoa Academy. The thesis concurs with Whitson's argument that Mao never advanced his strategic thinking beyond his own concept of Frunze's 'unified strategy'.¹⁰¹⁹ The PLA itself opted for professionalism over the mass line, resisting the political slogan expressed as 'better red than expert' - even in the early 1960s, when it was at its height, as this thesis shows.

The background starts with the Qing government's first attempt at a modern army with the 1894 'Newly Created Army' and its trials and tribulations. The failure of the various Chinese armies in the Boxer Rebellion is followed by the Qing government's attempts to create a modern army which was curtailed by the 1911 Republican Revolution. One theme noted throughout this period and up to the Communist takeover in 1949 was 'regionalism' or 'warlordism', where the local military commander took control over an area, and often the armies were loyal to the commander and not to the central government. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, later renamed People's Liberation Army, used this to create mass defections, and this became part of their operational art. The background then examined the power struggles inside the Republican government and finished with Sun Yat-sen's creation of the Whampoa Academy to create the National Revolutionary Army.

Chapter One, titled *The Idea of a Red Army: The Arming of the Chinese Communist Party 1919-1927*, focused on the early days of urban agitation in China and the early days of the Chinese Communist Party. The Soviet Union's influence was shown clearly with the creation of the Whampoa Academy and the National Revolutionary Army along with the need for the Chinese Communist Party to join as a group inside the Guomindang, creating the first United Front. No operational art was seen at this stage, although it was taught at the Whampoa Academy, except for the need to follow railways due to the almost non-existent road network in China and the use of bribes to have the local warlord's army join the National Revolutionary Army and keep his power lest he lose the

1019 . *Ibid.*, p. 473.

lot. The operational art was the earlier ‘unified model’ based on the Soviet’s experiences in the Civil War. The Chinese students who were taught later in the Soviet Union at Sun Yat-sen University and Frunze Military Academy were taught the latter. The latter model was for a mobile professional army whereas the other was better suited for a large militia-based force – more applicable to People’s War and the early years at Yan’an - especially in 1941 and 1942 in the aftermath of the Japanese *sankō* offensives in response to the One Hundred Regiments Campaign.

The need for a communist army was mooted after previously sympathetic warlords killed communist leaders organising railway labour unions. The Whampoa Academy gave the communist leaders valuable training which saw them export their ideology to Singapore and the creation of workers’ pickets to enforce the blockade of Hong Kong. This success in organising labour led to the early attempts of the CCP in organising an urban based revolution. The weakness of the Communists inside the Guomindang had been revealed in 1926 when Chiang Kai-shek purged many but the success of the workers’ pickets in taking over Shanghai prior to the arrival of the NRA in March and April 1927 saw him take action. On 12 April 1927 the Guomindang started the purging and destruction of the Chinese Communist Party, leading to the deaths of thousands in what became known as the ‘White Terror’. This led to the Nanchang Uprising and the creation of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army on 1 August 1927.

Chapter Two started with the statement that ‘the period 1927 – 1934 is the defining period of the People’s Liberation Army’s operational art’. It then went on to describe what was meant by the term ‘operational art’ as was taught at the Whampoa Academy and later to Chinese students in the Soviet Union which was a more refined version. The Soviet theories of the operational level of war were, and still are, the cornerstone of the People’s Liberation Army’s doctrine, and been proven to be the PLA’s ‘art of war’.

The failure of the nascent Red Army to create a series of urban based revolutions, ending with the ill-fated December 1927 Canton Commune showed no thought for an

operational art. This effectively ended the idea of an urban based revolution for the moment, as Mao also tried a rural based revolution in Hunan. He moved to the mountains of Jinggangshan and started putting together his thoughts of what became his and the People's Liberation Army's operational art.

Li Lisan took over the struggling Chinese Communist Party in 1928 and instituted what became known as the Li Lisan line. An aggressive urban insurgency and the taking over of cities was an abject failure which saw Mao's methods become ascendant due to the success of the Jinggangshan. Mao moved his base area away to Southern Jiangxi as the Jinggangshan was too small to successfully defend in the face of Guomindang attacks. Here Mao created the Jiangxi Soviet which from 1930 to 1934, withstood four major attacks and created a viable communist base area. The Red Army expanded, and had instilled into it Mao's four major points which became the basis for his operational art, the 'Eight Conditions for Victory' which espoused his operational and strategic doctrines of 'Luring the Enemy in Deep' and 'Protracted War'.

Mao lost his power base when the Returned Student Faction took over the Chinese Communist Party and the Jiangxi Soviet after their departure from Shanghai, in which it had become too difficult to operate. Regardless, nothing could stop the Guomindang's Fifth Encirclement Campaign which employed overwhelming firepower and siege warfare techniques which negated the Red Army's ability to manoeuvre and exploited its lack of heavy weapons. The Guomindang now employed a way to defeat Mao's operational art and the ever tightening circle saw the bulk of the Red Army and Chinese Communist Party cadres leave on the famous Long March.

Chapter Three examined the period from the Long March to the War of Liberation which saw the Chinese Communist Party take power in China. The PLA's operational art was tested against both Japanese and Guomindang forces, and its use of political action in conjunction with military force was proven against both.

After the Red Army ended the Long March in Yan'an, Mao set about establishing the Red University and rewriting his principles to enable the Red Army to learn and employ them. Cadres were sent out into the countryside to create a mass movement.

Chiang Kai-shek was forced to let the Red Army join with the Guomindang to form the Second United Front in December 1936 to fight the Japanese. It rarely worked in practice and ended in January 1941 after the Wannan Incident which saw the destruction of the headquarters of the New Fourth Army. The major assault by the Red Army, against the Japanese in North China, the August 1940 One Hundred Regiments Campaign, went against all of Mao's operational principles – especially as it had no identified operational goal. The Japanese retaliation from September 1940 was so severe that by the end of 1942 the Red Army had shrunk by 100,000 and vast areas came back under Japanese control.

Mao's operational art, encompassing both the political cadres and the Red Army working together to mobilise the masses, allowed the Chinese Communist Party to regain much of the territory back by mid-1943 and expanded its base by the end of 1945. This was aided by Japanese forces deploying to the Pacific due to the tide of the war turning against them. The *Zheng Feng* rectification movement aided this by instilling Party discipline and ensuring the correct Party line so that all members of the CCP worked in one direction under Mao's direction and in accordance with his operational principles. The Red Army was renamed the People's Liberation Army to identify its mission for the forthcoming war with the Guomindang for the control of China. If the operational art is 'the art of winning wars' then the Red Army's mastery of the operational art and operational level of warfare spelt doom for the Guomindang.

Unique to the PLA's operational art was Communist Principle Number Nine – the use of ex-enemy soldiers to boost the number of front line soldiers was widely employed as

were deception measures which were part of the PLA's operational art. There were rumblings even then between the differing styles of guerrilla and conventional units, between the Soviet 'integral' and 'unified' models of the operational art, which was to divide the PLA in the late 1950s. The first major campaigns were in Manchuria where the PLA was able to dictate the battle, putting the Guomindang on the defensive, and was able to get inside their decision-making cycle and exploit the distrust between Guomindang commanders. The ability to get whole Guomindang units to cross over and then incorporate them within the Red Army exacerbated this, as did the ineptness of many Guomindang commanders. By controlling the countryside, and its ability to move rapidly by foot and at night - enabling attacks from unexpected directions in pincer movements - the PLA eventually outmanoeuvred the Guomindang forces who had retreated into the cities; isolating themselves and leaving the countryside to the PLA. Each city in Manchuria and north China was eventually taken so that by January 1949, 500,000 of Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers were defeated and north China, including Beijing and Tianjin, along with Manchuria was under control of the CCP.

The end for the Guomindang came quickly. The PLA crossed the Yangtze in April 1949 creating two large armies that crushed the Guomindang as rapidly as they could move. One city after another fell in quick succession so by 1 October 1949, in Shanghai, Mao declared the People's Republic of China. The nascent Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of August 1927, now renamed the People's Liberation Army, had conquered China under the guidance of Mao Zedong and his contemporaries.

Chapter Four from 1950 to 1979 showed how the PLA went from a force that contained the United Nations in Korea, aided the Viet Minh to defeat the French, went through a massive professionalism with Soviet assistance, retreated into 'guerrillaism' under the guise of People's War, kept the peace in China during the Cultural Revolution, assisted the North Vietnamese to defeat South Vietnam and its allies, especially the United States, and then was militarily humiliated by the Vietnamese in the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war, precipitating the overhaul and modernisation of the PLA which is still underway.

One of the aims of this thesis was to enrich and deepen Whitson's work with the advantage of documents unavailable to him in the late 1960s and early 1970s. My research shows that the doctrine of Active Defence was the overriding concern of the PLA since 1930 and not People's War. Active Defence is based on three basic principles: no provocation of other nations; no bases anywhere on foreign soil; and no seizure of territory.¹⁰²⁰ The wars investigated by Chapter Four - the Chinese intervention against United Nations Forces in the Korean War, and the Sino-Vietnamese conflict - are justified using this strategy. Whitson was aware of this when he argued that the 1962 Sino-Indian War showed the continuity in the Chinese professional preference for the offensive defensive, the Chinese government's way of justifying pre-emptive strikes, in which the initial spoiling attack is staged against the weaker adversary (India) on the eve of an assumed coordinated attack against China (in this case the USSR).¹⁰²¹ This was also one of the rationales behind the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict; offensive defence representing the lynch pin of Active Defence.

The introduction noted that the PLA says that its doctrine in the 1950s was to 'Protect the North (from the Soviet Union) and Defend the South (Against the United States/Taiwan)'. In the 1960s this changed to 'Lure the Enemy Deep into the Country' in order to crush him with 'People's War'. In the 1970s, this became 'Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big'. By using examples of the PLA in battle I show how the doctrine changed in light of failures in battle. For example, the 1969 Zhen Bao Dao/Damanskyi island conflict and the PLA's incursion into Kazakhstan almost precipitated a nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and China. The casualties, and defeats, the PLA received forced the Chinese military and political planners to see how 'Lure the Enemy Deep', failed in light of the Soviet Union's nuclear and conventional weapons systems superiority. The debacle of the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese war showed how the PLA had

1020 . Sewell, *op.cit*, p. 2.

1021 . Whitson., *op. cit.*, p. 489.

forgotten how to fight a war and its ability to fight a war at the operational level had reached its nadir. Deng Xiaoping's reorganisation of the PLA which started in 1980 to rectify these faults and turn the People's Liberation Army into a modern military bore fruit and the results are seen today with the modern PLA.

Chapter Five, which is a smaller chapter than the others and different in structure, inspects how the PLA transformed itself from an essentially bloated infantry force to a mechanized one, starting to be both hardened and networked - in Chinese terms 'informationized'. The transformation was not easy but the operational doctrine, as espoused by many of the PLA's marshals and generals prior to the Cultural Revolution, could now be accomplished. By the start of the 21st Century extended mobile operations on China's periphery could be accomplished. The need for a comprehensive training area and the ability to perform counterinsurgency operations enabled the PLA to test many of these ideas in Xinjiang against what the Chinese government declare is an Al Qaeda sponsored Uyghur separatist movement. Modernisation to both the equipment and structure of the PLA at the lower levels enabled the PLA to face the future which was shown in Chapter Six and how the operational art was now accomplished with the force restructuring into units able to operate at the operational level.

Chapter Six started with the new structures being incorporated in to PLA to create a hardened and networked army using a modular (*pei shu*) approach to build battle groups appropriate to the mission and terrain. The PLA is creating at least two corps designed to break through another country's defences, and then exploit this breakthrough. The first unit for this new corps is the new mechanized infantry division designed to operate in urban and high altitude terrains. It is designed to be able to create independent battle groups and other PLA units have been identified to support it depending on the mission profile. The PLA created a composite cavalry brigade in the August 2007 Sino-Russian *Peace Mission 2007* exercise, which was the first major test of the *pei shu* concept. The composite brigade of light armour and helicopters was created from existing forces and was able to conduct light infantry operations, including counter-terrorism, reconnaissance

and screening operations across a wide area. The chapter explored the *zhi chi* concept to create a battlefield logistics organisation able to supply and support forces deep inside an enemy's rear. Simple matters like high altitude and cold weather rations are looked at along the new integrated weapons systems designed to propel the PLA into the forefront of military forces in Asia.

The PLA has reached a stage of its history where it can fully implement its operational art that took root in the theories espoused by Tukhachevsky, Svechin and others, taught to Red Army commanders at the Frunze Academy in the 1920s and 1930s, and tried to be implemented in the 1950s and 1960s only to be thwarted by the Cultural Revolution. The People's Liberation Army's operational art has come of age. *Tuo Mao* – removing the last vestiges of Mao Zedong's vision for China's armed forces – has occurred at the operational level without fanfare but with incremental effect.

SUMMARY

Tuo Mao translates literally as ‘shedding feathers’ but in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) it is the euphemism for removing the last vestiges of Mao Zedong’s vision for China’s armed forces. Mao envisaged letting an enemy strike deep into China and then be destroyed by a vast militia force using ‘People’s War’. This vision, to which the PLA only paid lip service, has been replaced by a modern combined arms force, utilising modular independent battle groups able to fight on and outside China’s land borders, hence the term ‘Shedding Mao’. It is therefore the contention and central argument of this thesis that by studying the operational history of the People’s Liberation Army, it may be argued that its operational art was forged in the period 1928-1937, was based on the Soviet Union’s doctrine of operational theory, and that this continues unto the present. The significance of the thesis is that it revises and updates conventional thinking among external analysts about China’s guiding defence philosophy.

Research in this thesis shows that the doctrine of Active Defence was the overriding concern of the PLA since 1930 and not People’s War. Active Defence is based on three basic principles: no provocation of other nations; no bases anywhere on foreign soil; and no seizure of territory. The PLA’s articulated doctrine in the 1950s was to ‘Protect the North and Defend the South’. In the 1960s this changed to ‘Lure the Enemy Deep into the Country’ in order to crush him with ‘People’s War’. In the 1970s, this became ‘Prepare to Fight Early and Fight Big’. By using examples of the PLA in battle this thesis shows how the doctrine changed in light of failures in battle. The post-Mao reorganisation of the PLA to rectify these faults and turn it into a modern military bore fruit and the results are seen today in an armed force that is becoming hardened and networked. The PLA has reached a stage of its history where it can fully implement its operational art that took root in the theories espoused in the 1920s and 1930s through the Soviet model, and tried to be implemented in the 1950s and 1960s only to be thwarted by the Cultural Revolution. The People’s Liberation Army’s operational art, this thesis demonstrates, has come of age.

APPENDICES

Appendix One

Arsenal Administration Office: Firearms in Services in China, December 1934

(The names in quotes are not certain, except '3 10s', which was named to celebrate 10/10/1921 – 10/10/10 in the Republic calendar, developed by T.E. Liu)

I. Pistols

Country Origin.	Factory	Model	Cal	Type	Name	Note
China	Hangyang	M96	7.63	Pistol	Hangyang M96 7.63 Pistol	
China	Gongxian	M96	7.63	Pistol	Gongxian M96 7.63 Pistol	
Spain		M96	7.63	Pistol	Astra M96 7.63 Pistol	
Spain		M96	7.63	Pistol	Astra 20-shot M96 7.63 Pistol	
Germany		M96	7.63	Pistol	German 20-shot M96 7.63 Pistol	
Germany		M96	7.63	Pistol	German 10-shot M96 7.63 Pistol	
Japan		T26	9	Pistol	Japanese T26 9mm Pistol	
Belgium		Browning	9	Pistol	Belgium Browning 9mm Pistol	
Belgium		Browning	7.65	Pistol	Belgium Browning 7.65 Pistol	
		M96	9	Pistol	M96 'Lotus Shell' 9mm Pistol	
		M96	8.8	Pistol	M96 8.8mm Pistol	
Belgium		Royal	8 in	Pistol	Belgium Royal 8 in BrowningPistol	
		Diamond	8 in	Pistol	Belgium Diamond 8 in BrowningPistol	
			6.35	Pistol	6.35 4 in BrowningPistol	

			.38	Pistol	.38 Revolver Pistol	
			.32	Pistol	.32 Revolver Pistol	

II. Rifles/Carbines

Country Ori.	Factory	Model	Cal	Type	Name	Note
China	Hangyang	T88	7.9	Rifle	Hangyang 7.9mm Rifle	Clip
China	Gongxian	Type One	7.9	Rifle	Gongxian 7.9mm Rifle	Charger Clip
China	Shanghai		6.8	Rifle	Shanghai 6.8mm Rifle	
China	Guandong	Type One	6.8	Rifle	Guandong 6.8mm Rifle	
China	Guandong	Type One	7.9	Rifle	Guandong 7.9mm Rifle	Charger Clip
China	Fengtien		7.9	Rifle	Fengtien 7.9mm Rifle	Charger Clip
China	Sichuan	Type One	7.9	Rifle	Sichuan 7.9mm Rifle	Charger Clip
China	Shanghai		7.9	Rifle	Shanghai 7.9mm Rifle	Clip
China	Taiyuan		7.9	Rifle	Taiyuan 7.9mm Rifle	
Germany		M88	7.9	Rifle	German M88 7.9mm Rifle	
Germany		M98	7.9	Rifle	German M98 7.9mm Rifle	
Germany		M24	7.9	Rifle	German M24 7.9mm Rifle	
Germany		Mauser	10	Rifle	German 9-shot 10mm Mauser Rifle	
Germany		Mauser	11	Rifle	German 9-shot 'Klaus' Mauser 11mm Rifle	
Germany		Mauser	11	Rifle	German 9-shot Mauser	

					11mm Rifle	
Germany		Mauser	11	Rifle	German single-shot Mauser 11mm Rifle	
US		Mauser	11	Rifle	Lee 5-shot 11mm Rifle	
US		Mauser	11	Rifle	Lee Single-shot 11mm Rifle	
Britain			11	Rifle	British Martini 11mm Rifle	
Britain			11	Rifle	British Belgium Peabody 11mm Rifle	
Britain			.6	Rifle	British 'Taiberi' .6 Rifle	
Britain			.45	Rifle	British Snider .45 Rifle	
France				Rifle	French 'Farderly' Rifle	
France				Rifle	French Hotchikiss .35 Rifle	
France				Carbine	French 'Farderly' Carbine	
Belgium			7.7	Rifle	Belgium 7.7mm Rifle	
US			11	Rifle	US Hotchikiss 11mm Rifle	
US			11	Rifle	US Winchester 11mm Rifle	
US		Winchester	.35	Rifle	US Wincheste .35 Rifle	
US			7	Rifle	US 7mm Rifle	
US			.45	Rifle	US 'Messli' Rifle	
Japan		T30	6.5	Rifle	Japanese T30 6.5mm Rifle	
Japan		T38	6.5	Rifle	Japanese T38 6.5mm Rifle	
Japan		Murata	8	Rifle	Japanese Murata 8mm Rifle	

Japan		Murata	8	Carbine	Japanese Murata 8mm Carbine	
Japan		T38	6.5	Carbine	Japanese T38 6.5mm Carbine	
Japan		T30	6.5	Carbine	Japanese T30 6.5mm Carbine	
Belgium		M24	7.9	Rifle	Belgium M24 7.9mm Rifle	
Belgium			7.7	Carbine	Belgium 7.7mm Carbine	
Austria			6.8	Rifle	Austrian 6.8mm Rifle	
Austria		Mannlicher	8	Rifle	Austrian Mannlicher 8mm Rifle	
Austria		Mannlicher	8	Carbine	Austrian Mannlicher 8mm Carbine	
Austria		'Scott'	7.7	Rifle	Austrian 'Scott' 7.7mm Rifle	
Austria		'Heodero'	8	Rifle	Austrian 'Heodero' Rim-fire 8mm Rifle	Rim-fire
Britain		Remington	.35	Rifle	British Remington Center-fire .35 Rifle	11.5mm
Britain			.45	Rifle	British Remington Center-fire .45 Rifle	14.0mm
Russia			7.62	Rifle	Russian 7.62mm Rifle	
Russia		Mauser	10	Rifle	Russian 11mm Mauser	10mm
Italy			6.6	Rifle	Italian 6.6mm Rifle	
Philippine			6.8	Rifle	Philippine 6.8mm Rifle	

III. Machineguns

Country	Factory	Model	Cal.	Type	Name	Note
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Ori.						
China	Jinling	Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	Jinling Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
China	Jinling	Automatic Rifle	8		Jinling 8mm Automatic Rifle	
China	Hangyang	'3 10s'	7.9	Water-cooled	Hangyang '3 10s' 7.9mm Water-cooled	Browning
China	Hangyang		7.63	Submachinegun	Hangyang 7.63mm submachinegun	Russian
China	Gongxian	Dual-Wheel	7.62	Water-cooled	Gongxian Dual-Wheel 7.62mm Water-cooled	
China	Huayang	'3 10s'	7.9	Water-cooled	Huayang '3 10s' 7.9mm Water-cooled	
China	Taku	Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	Taku Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
China	Taku	Czech	7.9	Submachinegun	Taku Czech 7.9mm Submachinegun	
China	Sichuan		6.8	Water-cooled	Sichuan 6.8mm Water-cooled	
China	Guandong		8	Single	Guandong Single 8mm machinegun	
China	Taiyuan	Thompson	11	Submachinegun	Taiyuan 11mm submachinegun	
China	Huayang		7.63	Submachinegun	Huayang 7.63mm submachinegun	
China	Gongxian		7.63	Submachinegun	Gongxian 7.63mm submachinegun	
China	Shanghai	'3 10s'	7.9	Water-cooled	Shanghai '3 10s' 7.9mm Water-cooled	
China	Shanghai		7.63	Submachinegun	Shanghai 7.63mm submachinegun	
China	Fujiang	Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	Fujiang Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	

China	Hunan	Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	Hunan Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
China	Shendong	Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	Shendong Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
France		Hotchikiss	13.2	anti-aircraft machinegun	French 13mm dual anti-aircraft machinegun	Anti-aircraft & personel
France		Hotchikiss	7.9	Drum Machinegun	French Hotchikiss 7.9mm machinegun	
Swiss		Solotharn	7.9	Drum Machinegun	Swiss Solotharn 7.9mm machinegun	
Britain		Vickers	7.9	Drum Machinegun	British Vickers 7.9mm machinegun	
Czech		Czech	7.9	Drum Machinegun	Czech 7.9mm machinegun	
Belgium		Browning	7.9	Machinegun	Belgium Browning 7.9mm machinegun	
Germany		Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	German Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
Germany		Maxim	7.9	Water-cooled	German '4 Points' Maxim 7.9mm Water-cooled	
Germany		Bergman	7.9	machinegun	German Bergman 7.9mm machinegun	
Germany		Maxim	7.9	machinegun	German Maxim 7.9mm machinegun	Anti-aircraft tripod
Germany		Hotchikiss	8	machinegun	German Hotchikiss 8mm machinegun	
Germany		Kiraly	7.9	machinegun	German Kiraly 7.9mm machinegun	Automatic Rifle, KE7
Italy			6.6	machinegun	Italian 6.6mm machinegun	
Japan		T38	6.5	machinegun	Japanese T38 6.5mm	

					machinegun	
Japan			6.5	machinegun	Japanese 6.5mm machinegun	

IV. Submachineguns

Country Ori.	Factory	Model	Cal.	Type	Name	Note
China	Huayang		7.63	submachinegun	Huayang submachinegun 7.63mm	
China	Gongxian		7.63	submachinegun	Gongxian submachinegun 7.63mm	
China	Hangyang		7.63	submachinegun	Hangyang submachinegun 7.63mm	
China	Shanghai		7.63	submachinegun	Shanghai submachinegun 7.63mm	
Germany		M96	7.63	submachinegun	German M96 submachinegun 7.63mm	
Germany		Bergman	7.65	submachinegun	German Bergman submachinegun 7.65mm	
US			11	submachinegun	US 11mm submachinegun	

Appendix Two

Tactical and Technical Characteristics of Primary Models of Small Arms of the Chinese People's Volunteers

Nomenclature	Calibre in mm	Weight in kg	Muzzle Velocity in mps	Maximum range in meters	Practical rate of fire in rpm	Number of rounds in magazine (belt)	Remarks
Type 26 Revolver (1893)	9	1.019	-	-	-	6	Japanese
Type 1895 Revolver	7.62	0.794	280	700	7 in 15- 20 seconds	7	
TT Model 1930/33 Pistol	7.62	0.854	440	Up to 1,000	8 in 10- 15 seconds	8	
Nambu Pistol	8	0.977	290	500	-	8	Japanese
Type 14 Pistol (1925)	8	0.907	290	500	-	8	Japanese
Type 94 Pistol (1934)	8	0.765	275	500	-	6	Japanese

Submachine gun	8	-	-	-	-	-	Japanese
PPSh-41 Model 1941 Submachine Gun	7.62	3.65	500	1.200	100-140	35/71	First number is box magazine, second is drum
PPS-43 Model 1943 Submachine Gun	7.62	3.04	500	1,200	100-120	35	
Model 1891/30 Rifle	7.62	4.3	865	3,000	10-12	5	
Arisaka Model 37 Rifle	6.5	4.4 with bayonet	730	2,400	10-12	5	Japanese
Carbine Model 1938	7.62	3.55	820	3,000	10-12	5	
Carbine Model 1944	7.62	3.9	820	3,000	10-12	5	
Arisaka Type 44 Carbine	6.5	3.73	670	2.000	10-12	5	Japanese

Type 91 (1931) and Type 97 (1937) Sniper's Rifle	6.5	4.5 less bayonet	740	2,400	10-12	5	Japanese
Type 99 Rifle (1939)	7.7	4 less bayonet	700	2,750	10-12	5	Japanese
Type 99 Long Rifle (1939)	7.7	4.09 less bayonet	778	3,500	10-12	5	Japanese
Type 2 New Rifle	7.7	-	-	-	-	-	Japanese
Degtyarev DP Light Machine Gun	7.62	10.5	840	3,000	80	47	
Degtyarev DPM Light Machine Gun	7.62	10.85	840	3,000	80	47	
Type 11 (1922)	6.5	10.2	740	4,000	150	30	Japanese

Light Machine Gun							
Type 96 (1936) Light Machine Gun	6.5	9.07	735	4,000	150	30	Japanese
Type 99 (1939) Light Machine Gun	7.7	9.07	760	3,475	250	30	Japanese
Type 92 (1932) Medium Machine Gun	7.7	55.3	740	4,200	200	30	Japanese
Maxim Model 1910 Medium Machine Gun	7.62	63.6	800	3,000	250-300	250	
SG-43 (Model 1943) Medium Machine Gun	7.62	44.5	800	3,000	250-300	250	
DShK Model	12.7	169.4	835-865	7,000	80	50	

1938 Heavy Machine Gun							
DShK Model 1938/46 Heavy Machine Gun	12.7	167.0	835-865	7,000	80-100	50	
Type 93 (1933) Heavy Machine Gun	13.2	39.5	670-700	4,000	-	30	Japanese

Note – Beside these weapons, the CPV also had a large number of American weapons as well.

* - Accurate aimed range

Source: Appendix 20 in Volkovskiy & Petrova, *op. cit.*, p. 858.

Appendix Three

Tactical and Technical Characteristics of Primary Models of Artillery Armaments of the CPV at the Regimental Level

Nomenclature	Firing range in kilometres	Muzzle velocity in mps	Weight of projectile	Weight of system in firing position	Practical rate of fire – rounds per minute	Remarks
50mm Type 98 Mortar (1938)	-	-	4.5	21.7	-	Japanese
60mm Mortar	1.8	57.4-158.0	1.34-1.83	20.5	18	American
70mm Type 11 Mortar	1.55	-	2.14	60	-	Japanese
81mm Mortar	3.0	214	3.12	61.6	18	American
81mm Type 97 Mortar (1937)	2.83	-	-	65.7	-	Japanese
81mm Type 99 Mortar (1939)	3.0	-	6.5	23.5	-	Japanese
82mm Mortar	3.3	67-202	3.31	44.5	Up to 25	
90mm Type 94	3.8	-	4.2	154	-	Japanese

Mortar (1934)						
106.7mm Mortar	4.02	61-255	11.1-11.7	151	5	American
107mm Mortar	6.3	302	9.0	170	16	
120mm Mortar	5.7	272	15.9	280	12-15	
120mm Type 2 (1942) Heavy Mortar	-	-	-	-	-	Japanese
150mm Type 33 (1933) Heavy Mortar	2.12	-	25.4	99.8	-	Japanese
37mm Type 94 AT Gun (1934)	4.57	800	1.225	324	10-20	Japanese
45mm AT Gun	4.4	870- 1070	1.4	600	30	
45mm Type 1 AT Gun (1941)	-	820	2.8	750	-	Japanese
57mm Recoilless Rifle	3.97	366	1.22	20 without tripod	10	American
57mm AT Gun	8.4	990- 1270	1.79-3.14	1150	15-25	
70mm Type 92	2.8	197	2.8	212	10	Japanese

Howitzer (1932)						
75mm Type 41 Mountain Gun (1908)	7.1	380	5.6	544	10	Japanese
75mm Type 94 Gun (1934)	8.0	396	5.6	544	10-12	Japanese
76mm Model 1943 Regimental Gun	4.3	262	6.23	600	12	
<p>Sources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Brief Handbook on Organization, Armaments, and Operational-Tactical Norms of the US Army. 2nd Directorate of the General Staff, Moscow, 1953 2. Handbook on the Armed Forces of Japan, GRU, Moscow, Voenizdat 1945 						

Source: Appendix 21 in Volkovskiy & Petrova, *op. cit.*, pp. 859 & 860.

Appendix Four

Comparative Table of Changes in the Number of Personnel and Equipment in Divisions of the Opposing Sides During the Course of the Korean War

Personnel/Equipment	Korean Peoples' Army			Chinese People's Volunteers		Republic of Korea Army			US Army
	Pre-war	By the end of 1 st Stage	During 3 rd Stage	By the 3 rd Stage	During 4 th Stage	Pre-war	During 2 nd Stage	During 4 th Stage	Pre-war – During war
Personnel	12,196	9,698	10,082	11,321	14,963	11,350	11,975	14,578	18,804
Rifles and Carbines	8,017	6,547		3,993	8,176	9,500	9,746	12,014	14,629
Automatic rifles	-	-		-	-	-	246	-	412
Submachine guns	1,950	1,932		732	3,145	252	285	1,543	638
Light machine guns	338	345		201	470	54	81	139	160
Medium machine guns	204	202		54	162	72	84	-	40
Heavy machine guns	18 (AA)	36 (AA)		-	32 (AA)	-	119	167	354
Grenade launchers	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	2,148
AT rifles	135	129		-	-	-	-	-	-
2.36 inch bazooka	-	-		-*	-*	111	-	-	81

3.5 inch Super Bazooka	-	-		_*	_*	-	-	258	465
60mm mortars	-	-		84	-	108	84	84	84
81/82mm mortars	89	87		27	87	54	54	36	40
4.2 inch/107mm mortars	-	-		-	18	-	36	12	36
120mm mortars	-	-		12	12	-	-	-	-
12.7mm AA mount	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	32
37mm AA gun	-	12		-	12	-	-	-	-
40mm AA mount	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	32
45mm AT gun	48	52		-	-	-	-	-	-
57mm recoilless rifle	-	-		-	-	-	18	54	81
57mm AT gun	-	-		-	30	18	-	-	-
75mm recoilless rifle	-	-		-	18	-	-	18	39
75mm gun	-	-		12	-	-	-	-	-
76mm gun	36	36		-	12	-	-	-	-
70mm howitzer	-	-		12	-	-	-	-	-
105mm howitzer	-	-		-	-	30	18	54	54
122mm howitzer	12	12		-	12	-	-	-	-
155mm howitzer	-	-		-	-	-	-	18	18
Tanks	-	-		-	24	-	-	-	149
SP Mounts	16	16		-	16	-	-	-	

* Total bazookas used by the Chinese Peoples Volunteers as of 1 July 1951 – 763; as of 1 June 1953 was 4,525

Source: Appendix Four in Volkovskiy & Petrova, *op. cit.*, pp. 828 & 829.

Appendix Five

Chinese Built Infantry Weapons 1949-1979

Chinese Nomenclature	Original Design	Country of Origin
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Sub-Machine Guns

Type 50	7.62 x 25 mm PPSH-41	USSR
Type 53 Chāochaōngfēngqiāng (copy sub-machine gun)	7.62 x 25 mm PPS-43	USSR
Type 64	Silenced 7.62 x 25 mm	China

Rifles

Type 53 carbine	Mosin-Nagant carbine Model 1944	USSR
Type 56 carbine	7.62 x 39 mm SKS	USSR
Type 56 assault rifle	7.62 x 39 mm Modified AKM (receiver)	USSR
Type 68 assault rifle	7.62 x 39 mm	China

Machine Guns

Type 53 machine gun	7.62 x 54 mm DPM machine gun	USSR
Type 54	12.7 mm Model 38/46 heavy machine gun	USSR
Type 56	7.62 x 43mm RPD light machine gun	USSR
Type 57	7.62 x 54 mm SGM machine gun	USSR
Type 58	7.62 x 54 mm RP-46 company machine gun	USSR

Type 67	7.62 x 54 mm company machine gun	China
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Mortars

Type 31	60 mm M-2	USA
Type 53	82 mm M1937	USSR
Type 53	120 mm M1943	USSR
Type 55	Update of M1943 ¹⁰²²	USSR
Type 63	Update of Model 31	USA

Anti-Armour Weapons

Type 36	57 mm M18A1 recoilless rifle	USA
Type 51	3.5 inch M20 rocket launcher	USA
Type 52	75 mm M20 recoilless rifle	USA
Type 56	RPG-2 anti-tank rocket launcher	USSR
Type 65	82 mm B-10 recoilless gun	USSR
Type 69	RPG-7 anti-tank rocket launcher	USSR

Source: Visits to the Infantry Museum at Singleton Army Base and various issues of *Bingqi Zhishi* and *Qing Bingqi*.

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